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THE

BOOK

OF THE

Roman-Catholic Church:

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS

ADDRESSED TO

ROBT SOUTHEY, Esq. LL.D.

ON HIS

"BOOK OF THE CHURCH."

By CHARLES BUTLER, Esq.

Hæc à quovis alio quàm à me, scribi velim; à me, potiùs quàm à nemine.

LONDON:

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

MDCCCXXV.

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TO

CHARLES BLUNDELL, ESQ.

OF INCE-BLUNDELL,

IN THE COUNTY OF LANCASTER.

DEAR SIR,

I REQUEST your acceptance of my REPLY TO DR. SOUTHEY'S "BOOK OF THE CHURCH;"—a work with which you probably are not unacquainted.

It abounds with the strongest criminations of the roman-catholic religion, and of the conduct of our roman-catholic ancestors. I do not recollect that a publication more offensive, either to the understandings or the feelings of the roman-catholics, has appeared within our memory.

I willingly admit, that, to produce against our creed or conduct, all that research or fair argument can supply, is legitimate controversy; but surely, to conceal, or to represent our merits very briefly and imperfectly, and to display our defects at length, and with the highest colouring; to impute to our general body what, in justice, is only chargeable on individuals; or to estimate the writings or actions of our ancestors in the dark ages, by the notions and manners of the present age,—is a crying injustice.

Does not doctor Southey too often fall into all these errors? Is he sufficiently aware, —that the roman-catholics have sustained a defamation of three hundred years?—That, in consequence of it, an immense mass of prejudice was raised against them? That it yet retains its place in many uninstructed minds; and that it is not wholly eradicated from all the liberal and the informed? None of these believe that London was set on fire by the

roman-catholics, or in the truth of Oates's revelations: But the prejudice originally created by these fictions, has not entirely lost its effect: it still influences some respectable persons, in their opinions of the roman-catholic religion, much more than they are aware of.

This prejudice, "the Book of the Church" is admirably calculated both to keep alive and to increase:—To counteract its tendency is the object of the present pages. If doctor Milner had framed "*his Strictures*" upon the "Book of the Church" on a more extensive plan, it would have made this or any other answer to it unnecessary.

Such as my pages are,—I INSCRIBE THEM TO YOU: I hope they do not contain a word, at which the very learned, elegant and eloquent author of the work, to which they are addressed, can take just offence. My publications are numerous,—perhaps too numerous:—but I trust they do not contain one harsh

word; one, by which I have ever offended, either against charity, or even against civility.

No person admires more than I do, the golden sentence of St. Francis of Sales,—that "a good christian is never outdone in "good manners."

With the greatest respect,

I have the honour to be,

Your most obedient Servant,

CHARLES BUTLER.

Lincoln's-Inn,
4 November 1824.

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LETTERS

TO

DR. SOUTHEY,

ON HIS

BOOK OF THE CHURCH.

INTRODUCTION.

I. *The proper Style of Controversy:*—II. *The Creed of Pope Pius IV.:*—III. *Observations on such of the Articles in it as are expressed in general terms:*—IV. *Application of these Observations to Doctor Southey's Charge against the Roman-catholic Church, that her Doctrines are corrupt.*

SIR,

I HAVE perused with great attention, your "BOOK OF THE CHURCH," and find it to be, in many places, injurious to the roman-catholic church, and particularly so to the roman-catholics of England: under this impression, I address to you the following Letters.

I.

Proper Style of Controversy.

IN the year 1634, Pope Urban VIII. sent Father Jones, a Benedictine monk, called in religion Father *Leander, a Sancto Martino*, into England, to procure for the holy see accurate information, respecting the state of the established church; the condition of the English catholics; and the disposition of the government in their regard. On each of these heads, Father Leander made his report to his holiness. On the first, he thus expresses himself*: "The protestant church "retains an external appearance of the ecclesiastical "hierarchy which was in force during the time "of the ancient religion; it has its archbishops, "bishops, archdeacons, chapters of canons "in the cathedrals of the antient sees, and most "ample revenues. It preserves its antient edifices, "the names of the antient parishes, priests and "deacons, the form of conferring orders, which "agrees, in many respects, with the forms pre-"scribed by the Roman pontifical; it preserves also "the clerical habits and gowns, the pastoral crook "and copes, the ancient temples, parishes, churches "and colleges of magnificent structure, and attend-"ance on these is enjoined."—"In the greater "number of the articles of faith, the English pro-

* Clarendon's State Papers, vol. 1. page 197.

" testants of the established church are truly or-
" thodox; as on the sublime mysteries of the
" Trinity, and the Incarnation; on the economy
" of the redemption of man, and satisfaction;
" through the whole almost of the controversies
" respecting predestination, grace, and free will;
" the necessity and merit of good works, and the
" other articles expressed in the creed of the
" Apostles, in the Nicene and the Athanasian
" creeds, (as these stand in the roman-catholic
" liturgy), and in the four first general councils."

When there is so near an approximation in religious creeds, there certainly should be an equal approximation in christian and moral charity; an equal wish to sooth, to conciliate, to find the real points of difference very few, and to render them still fewer; and an equal unwillingness on each side to say, or to write, any thing unpleasing to the feelings of the other. In this amicable spirit, the controversy between Limborch and Orobio, and the conference between Bossuet and Claude were conducted; and in this spirit, it is hoped, the following pages will be found to be written. They are intended to be a reply to some passages in your "BOOK OF THE CHURCH," which contain inaccurate accounts, either of the faith, or the conduct of roman-catholics. These appear to me to be so numerous, as to render it necessary, in order completely to exhibit and refute them, to follow you chapter by chapter. This task is not pleasant; but I feel it due from me to my roman-

catholic brethren. It will give me unspeakable pleasure to find I have executed it to their satisfaction; and not offended the intelligent, or the candid, among their adversaries. What I consider to be truth, I must tell; but I hope to tell it in a manner, which will show sincere respect for those, whose different notions it opposes. Harsh or contumelious words never yet served the cause of truth or reason: St. Francis of Sales has justly observed, that "a good christian is never outdone "in good manners."

In the present introductory address, I shall insert the creed of Pope Pius IV, as an authentic exposition of the faith of the roman-catholic church. It contains a particular mention of most articles of her faith, and a general statement of the others: on the last I shall offer some observations.

I mean to proceed on the following plan:— The number of letters will be the same as the number of chapters in "the Book of the Church;" and each letter will notice what I consider to be proper subjects for animadversion in the chapter, which corresponds with it in number. As nothing of this nature occurs in the first chapter of "the "Book of the Church," I shall insert in my first letter some statements and remarks respecting the general diffusion of the roman-catholic religion over the world.

II.

The Creed of Pius IV.

THIS celebrated symbol of catholic faith was published by his holiness in 1564, in the form of a bull, addressed to all the faithful in Christ. It was immediately received throughout the universal church; and, since that time, has ever been considered, in every part of the world, as an accurate and explicit summary of the roman-catholic faith. Non-catholics, on their admission into the catholic church, publicly repeat and testify their assent to it, without restriction or qualification. It is expressed in the following terms:

"I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, "Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things "visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus "Christ, the only begotten Son of God; Light of "Light; true God of true God; begotten, not "made; consubstantial to the Father, by whom all "things were made; who, for us men and for our "salvation, came down from heaven, and was in-"carnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, "and was made man; was crucified also for us "under Pontius Pilate, suffered and was buried, "and rose again the third day, according to the "scriptures, and ascended into heaven; sits at the "right hand of the Father, and will come again "with glory to judge the living and the dead, of "whose kingdom there will be no end: and in the

" Holy Ghost, the Lord and Life Giver, who pro-
" ceeds from the Father and the Son; who, to-
" gether with the Father and Son, is adored and
" glorified; who spoke by the prophets: and one
" holy, catholic and apostolic church. I confess one
" baptism for the remission of sins; and I expect
" the resurrection of the body, and the life of the
" world to come. Amen.

" I most firmly admit and embrace apostolical
" and ecclesiastical traditions, and all other consti-
" tutions and observances of the same church.

" I also admit the sacred scriptures, according to
" the sense which the holy mother church has held,
" and does hold, to whom it belongs to judge of
" the true sense and interpretation of the holy
" scriptures; nor will I ever take or interpret
" them otherwise, than according to the unani-
" mous consent of the fathers.

" I profess also, that there are truly and properly
" seven sacraments of the new law, instituted by
" Jesus Christ our Lord, and for the salvation
" of mankind, though all are not necessary for
" every one; viz. baptism, confirmation, eucharist,
" penance, extreme unction, order, and matrimony,
" and that they confer grace; and of these, baptism,
" confirmation and order, cannot be reiterated with-
" out sacrilege.

" I also receive and admit the ceremonies of
" the catholic church, received and approved in
" the solemn administration of all the above-said
" sacraments.

" I receive and embrace all and every one of " the things, which have been defined and declared " in the holy council of Trent, concerning original " sin and justification.

" I profess likewise, that in the mass is offered " to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice " for the living and the dead; and that in the " most holy sacrifice of the eucharist there is truly, " really, and substantially the body and blood, " together with the soul and divinity of our Lord " Jesus Christ; and that there is made a conversion " of the whole substance of the bread into the " body, and of the whole substance of the wine into " the blood, which conversion the catholic church " calls transubstantiation.

" I confess also, that under either kind alone, " whole and entire, Christ and a true sacrament " is received.

" I constantly hold that there is a purgatory, " and that the souls detained therein are helped " by the suffrages of the faithful.

" Likewise, that the saints reigning together " with Christ, are to be honoured and invocated, " that they offer prayers to God for us, and that " their relics are to be venerated.

" I most firmly assert, that the images of Christ, " and of the Mother of God ever virgin, and also " of the other saints, are to be had and retained; " and that due honour and veneration are to be " given them.

" I also affirm, that the power of indulgences

"was left by Christ in the church, and that the "use of them is most wholesome to christian "people.

"I acknowledge the holy catholic and apostolical "roman church, the mother and mistress of all "churches; and I promise and swear true obedience "to the roman bishop, the successor of St. Peter, "the prince of the apostles, and vicar of Jesus "Christ.

"I also profess and undoubtedly receive all other "things delivered, defined, and declared by the "sacred canons, and general councils, and par-"ticularly by the holy council of Trent; and "likewise I also condemn, reject and anathematize "all things contrary thereto, and all heresies what-"soever condemned and anathematized by the "church.

"This true catholic faith, out of which none "can be saved, which I now freely profess, and "truly hold, I, *N.* promise, vow and swear most "constantly to hold and profess, the same whole "and entire, with God's assistance, to the end of "my life. Amen."

III.

Observations on such of the Articles of Faith, contained in the Creed of Pope Pius IV. as are expressed in general terms.

DETAILED accounts of these would not suit the plan of these letters. On all of them I beg leave

to suggest, that in every religious controversy between protestants and roman-catholics, the following rule should be rigidly observed:—"THAT NO DOCTRINE SHOULD BE ASCRIBED TO THE ROMAN-CATHOLICS AS A BODY, EXCEPT SUCH AS IS AN ARTICLE OF THEIR FAITH."

Among the many misconceptions of their tenets, of which the roman-catholics have to complain, they feel none more than those, which proceed from a want of the observance of this rule. It is most true, that the roman-catholics believe the doctrines of their church to be unchangeable; and that it is a tenet of their creed, that what their faith ever has been, such it was from the beginning, such it now is, and such it ever will be. But this proposition they confine to the articles of their faith; and they consider no doctrine to be of faith, unless it have been delivered by divine revelation, and propounded by the roman-catholic church, as a revealed article of faith. This the roman-catholics wish their adversaries never to forget.

When any of their adversaries find, in any catholic writer, a position, which they think reprehensible, they should inquire, whether it be an article of catholic faith, or an opinion of the writer. In the latter case, they should reflect, that the general body of the catholics is not responsible for it, and should therefore abstain from charging it upon the body.

If they take the higher ground, they should first endeavour to ascertain, that it is an article of the

catholic faith. But here, again, they should carefully examine, whether it be the principle itself, which they mean to impute to the catholics, or a consequence which they themselves deduce from it. These are widely different, and should never be confounded. If it be the principle, they should then inquire, whether it has been propounded as an article of faith by the church. A wise method of ascertaining this would be, to read the "*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*" A proper perusal, however, of that document requires attentive study. If they be unable to give it such a perusal, let them read Bossuet's "*Exposition of Faith,*" and consult Mr. Gother's "*Papist Misrepresented and Represented,*" or at least doctor Challoner's abridgment of it; let them also read doctor Challoner's "*Three Short Summaries of the Catholic Faith and Doctrine,*" contained in three sections prefixed to his "*Garden of the Soul,*" the most popular Prayer Book of the English catholics. Having read these, let them ascertain, whether the doctrine, with which they charge the catholics, be, in terms or substance, stated in any of these works, to be an article of their faith. If they conceive that it is so stated, in any of them, let them insert in their publication the passage in which they profess to discover the erroneous tenet; mentioning explicitly the work, the edition of it, and the page in which it is contained. Should the passage be found, in terms or substance, in any of the works which have been mentioned; then it will

be incumbent on the catholics, either to show that the writer, in whose work the passage is found, was mistaken, (which, from the acknowledged character of all the works, will, in all probability, never happen), or to admit that it is an article of their faith: the roman-catholics will then be justly chargeable with it, and with the consequences justly deducible from it. Whatever other opinions can be adduced, though they be the opinions of their most respectable writers, though they be the opinions of the fathers of their church, still they are but matters of opinion, and a catholic may disbelieve them, without ceasing to be a catholic. Would it not be both a fair and short way of ending the controversy between the protestants and catholics, that every person, who charges the general body of catholics with any religious tenet, should be obliged to cite, from the catechism of the council of Trent, or from one or other of the works which have been mentioned, the passage in which such tenet is contained and propounded as an article of faith?

IV.

Application of the preceding Suggestion to the charge of corrupt Doctrine and unjustifiable Practices, repeatedly brought against the Roman-catholic Body in "the "Book of the Church."

I REQUEST you to consider with attention the rule which I have suggested: then to ascertain whether any doctrine, which you have imputed to the roman-

catholics, or the sanction of any practice which you have charged upon them, is to be found in the creed of Pius IV, the council of Trent, in its catechism, or in any of the works which I have mentioned, or in any other work of similar authority. If you find it in the council, in its catechism, or in any of the works which I have mentioned, the roman-catholics must abide the consequences. If you do not find it; you may abuse the doctrine and those who maintain it, in any terms you think proper; but you are not entitled to charge it upon the roman-catholics: it is merely the imagination of an individual; it is no part of the catholic creed.

If any of the ridiculous doctrines which are maintained by any of the sectaries mentioned in a publication not unknown to you,—*The Letters of Don Manuel Alvarez Espriella**,—all of whom appeal to the scriptures, and protest against popery,

* Espriella's list of them is curious: "Arminians, Socinians, Baxterians, Presbyterians, New-Americans, Sabellians, Lutherans, Unitarians, Millenarians, Necessarians, Sublapsarians, Supralapsarians, Muggletonians, Antinomians, Hutchinsonians, Sandemonians, Baptists, Anabaptists, Pœdobaptists, Methodists, Universalists, Calvinists, Materialists, Destructionists, Brownists, Independants, Protestants, Hugonots, Non-jurors, Seceders, Hernhutters, Dunkers, Jumpers, Shakers, and Quakers, &c. &c. &c." A precious nomenclature! An interesting account of many of these sectaries is given in the "Histoire des Sectes Religieuses, par M. Gregoire, 2 vols. 8vo. 1810." From this work Espriella might have considerably augmented his own list.

and are therefore, according to *the protestant catechism*, published by the learned bishop of St. David's, to be deemed protestants—should be charged by a roman-catholic on a protestant of the church of England, as a tenet of his religious creed, might not the protestant justly require the roman-catholic to point out the doctrine or the practice thus charged upon him, either in the Bible, or at least in the Thirty-nine Articles, or the Liturgy? and, if it should not be found in any of these, would not the protestant be justly acquitted of all responsibility for it? By parity of reason,—in all the cases, in which you charge the roman-catholics with corrupt doctrine, is not the roman-catholic entitled to require that you should point it out in the council, or in some or other of the works I have referred to? and if you should not find it, will not the roman-catholics be similarly entitled to an acquittal from all responsibility for it?

It is the same with respect to the practices, for which, in a multitude of instances, you have criminated the roman-catholics, sometimes individually, but oftener collectively: May you not be justly required to show, that the council, or some of the works which have been referred to, contains the doctrine which prescribes, or sanctions, or excuses, the practice thus charged on the roman-catholics? and, if no such doctrine should be found in them, will you not be bound to retract the charge?

Here then I confidently take my stand.—I acknowledge that individual catholics have maintained

unjustifiable doctrines, and been guilty of unjustifiable practices; but I insist on the production of the tenet, justly ascribable to the catholic creed, to which any such doctrine or practice can fairly be attributed. I aver, that no such tenet can be produced: if it cannot, I claim for my church an acquittal from your charges.

Does not this alone answer every charge in "the "Book of the Church?" I admire the elegance, the energy of its style, and the many other beauties of composition with which it abounds; but I find nowhere in it a citation from any work, or any document, *like those I have mentioned*, which prescribes, or sanctions, or excuses any corrupt doctrine, or any unjustifiable practice. Till such a passage is found, much may be said about our creed, and about our practices. We ourselves should join in much of what may be so said; but every charge, not substantiated in the manner I have mentioned,

"Is but leather and prunella!"

POPE.

LETTER I.

A GEOGRAPHICAL VIEW OF THE ROMAN-CATHOLIC CHURCH.

SIR,

THE smallness of the number of the roman-catholics in England, compared to that of its general population, is always before the eyes of protestants; and too often prevents them from sufficiently attending to the general diffusion of the roman-catholic religion over the habitable globe; or to the immense numerical superiority of its members over those of any protestant church, and even over those of all protestant churches in the aggregate.

"The catholic," says doctor Milner, "is still "the religion of the states of Italy, of most of the "Swiss cantons, of Piedmont, of France, of Spain, "of Portugal, and of the islands of the Mediterranean; in three parts in four of the Irish, of "far the greater part of the Netherlands, Poland, "Bohemia, Germany, Hungary, and the neighbouring provinces; and in those kingdoms and states, "in which it is not the established religion, its followers are very numerous, as in Holland, Russia, "Turkey, the Lutheran and Calvinistic states of "Germany and England. Even in Sweden and "Denmark, several catholic congregations, with "their respective pastors, are to be found. The "whole vast continent of South America, inhabited

" by many millions of converted Indians, as well as
" by many Spaniards and Portuguese, may be said
" to be catholic. The same may be said of the
" empire of Mexico, and the surrounding kingdoms
" in North America, including California, Cuba,
" Hispaniola, &c. Canada and Louisiana are chiefly
" catholic; and throughout the United Provinces,
" the catholic religion, with its several establish-
" ments, is completely protected and unboundedly
" propagated. To say nothing of the islands of
" Africa inhabited by catholics, such as Malta,
" Madeira, Cape Verd, the Canaries, the Azores,
" Mauritius, Goree, &c. there are numerous
" churches of catholics established and organized
" under their pastors in Egypt, Ethiopia, Algiers,
" Tunis, and the other Barbary states on the
" northern coast; particularly at Angola and Congo.
" Even on the eastern coast, particularly in the
" kingdom of Zanguebar and Monomotapa, are
" numerous catholic churches. There are also
" numerous catholic priests, and many bishops,
" with numerous flocks, throughout the greater part
" of Asia. All the Maronites about Mount Li-
" banus, with their bishops, priests and monks, are
" catholics; and so are many Armenians, Persians
" and other christians of the surrounding kingdoms
" and provinces. In whatever island or states the
" Portuguese or Spanish power does prevail, or has
" prevailed, most of the inhabitants, and in some,
" all of them, have been converted. The whole
" population of the Phillippine Islands, consist-

" ing of two millions of souls, is all catholic. The " diocese of Goa contains 400,000 catholics. In " a late parliamentary record, it is stated that in " Travancor and Cochin is a catholic archbishopric, " with two bishoprics; one of which contains 35,000 " communicants. There are numerous catholic " flocks, with their priests, and even bishops, in all " the kingdoms and states beyond the Ganges, par- " ticularly in Siam, Cochin-china, Tonquin, and the " different provinces of the Chinese empire."

Such is the extent of the roman-catholic religion. You describe it, in the last line of your tenth chapter, as " a prodigious structure of imposture and wicked- " ness." Is it decorous to apply this opprobious language to a religion professed in such extensive territories? Several of which are in the highest state of intellectual advancement, and abound, as you must acknowledge, with persons, from the very highest to the very lowest condition of life, of the greatest honour, endowments and worth?—If the religion of this large proportion of the christian world really be, " the prodigious structure of im- " posture and wickedness " you describe it,—have not the gates of hell, contrary to the most solemn promise of the Son of God, prevailed against his church? I must also request you to inform me, *when* " this prodigious structure of imposture and " wickedness " was raised. You must be sensible the æras assigned for it by many of your eminent writers are very different and very numerous.

But, putting this universal diffusion of the roman-

catholic religion out of consideration, and confining these observations to the roman-catholic subjects of his Britannic majesty, permit me to observe to you, that the number of these, exceeds the number of any other denomination of his majesty's christian subjects throughout his empire. Surely this entitles them to be treated with the language of decent controversy. Even confining the case to the English catholics,—the proportionate number of whom I acknowledge to be small,—even *they* are entitled to this decency of treatment. We are not the *vilia corpora* to whom the language, which modern manners has banished from conversation, should be applied. "When I speak," said the late Mr. Wyndham, on presenting the petition of the English roman-catholics in 1810, "of the ob-
"scurity of the English roman-catholics, I do not
"mean that they are destitute of hereditary vir-
"tues and hereditary dignities, that they are not
"a part of that class which ought to be denomi-
"nated *Ultimi Romanorum.*"—(You see, Sir, that this great man thought, that a right to this appellation was honourable.)—"I cannot," he continued, "contemplate a more noble and affecting
"spectacle, than an antient roman-catholic gentle-
"man, in the midst of his people, exercising the
"virtues of beneficence, humanity and hospitality.
"If they are obscure, it is because they are pro-
"scribed as aliens in the state; because they are
"shut out from this assembly, where many of those,
"who are far less worthy, are allowed to sit.

"Have they ever exercised those vile arts, which "are exercised so successfully by many, to creep "into power and place? Have they ever attempted "to obtain their rights, either by clamour or by "servility? On the contrary, their conduct has "proved that no other body is more justly entitled "to respect and admiration." This was the language of one of the most able statesmen, most accomplished scholars, most perfect gentlemen, and best judges of men and things in our times.

LETTER II.

FIRST INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY.

SIR,

WE know that Julius Cæsar invaded Great Britain fifty-four years before the birth of Christ; that it was invaded by the Saxons, four hundred and forty-nine years after the christian æra. It is probable, that christianity was disseminated over parts of England during the apostolic age. This was universally believed by our ancestors; some have called it *the first of the three conversions of England* to christianity. We are informed by the venerable Bede, and by several of our early historians, that, about the one hundred and seventeenth year of the christian æra, pope Eleutherius, on the application of Lucius, a British prince, the third in descent from Caractacus, and particularly favoured by the Romans, commissioned two clergymen Fugatius and Damianus, to preach the gospel to the Britons. This has been called *the second of the three conversions of Britain* to christianity. Doctor Heylin* asserts, that Lucius procured archiepiscopal sees to be erected at York, Caerleon upon Usk, and London, for the northern, southern, and western parts of England; and suffragan

* Help to History, p. 69.

bishops to be assigned to each. The concurrent testimonies of Tertullian, Eusebius, and Theodoret, show, that christianity made a considerable progress in the island, particularly in its southern parts. It was favoured by the extirpation of the religion of the Druids, whom the Roman arms had expelled into Wales. The general persecution of christianity, by the emperor Dioclesian, severely visited the christians of Britain. St. Alban, and Julius and Aaron of Caerleon, suffered death for the faith of Christ: the former is styled the protomartyr of Britain; his memory was always singularly venerated by the catholics of England.

That much in the history of the two first conversions of England is questionable, cannot be doubted. But does not equal doubt, at least, attend the early history, whether sacred or profane, of every nation? Those who have read the learned and entertaining discussions of M. Frêret, and M. Beaufort, on the History of the Five First Centuries of Rome, must admit, that the popular accounts of the two first conversions of England are entitled to as much credit as the accounts given by the historians of Rome of the early period of her history; and that the documents, on which the history of the first conversions of England depend, approach much nearer than those of the antient Romans to historical certitude. It seems difficult to deny that they favour the catholic doctrine of the pope's supremacy, and his right of general

superintendance over the spiritual concerns of the church of Christ*;

* This letter was written, after having considered all the authorities collected upon the subject, in the first tome of the "Annales Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ, auctore R. Patre Michaele "Alfordo, alias Griffith, Anglo, Societatis Jesu, Theologo;" in four large folio volumes. His extracts from the original authors are so copious as to leave the reader, who wishes for original information, hardly any thing to desire. The writer also had perused with great attention the six first chapters of the first part of father Persons's "Treatise of the "Three Conversions of the Church of England,"—a learned work, now become exceedingly scarce.

LETTER III.

THE ANGLO-SAXONS.

SIR,

IN this letter I shall particularly notice,—I. The *conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to christianity*:—II. *The conformity of the religion, the religious ceremonial, and the morality preached to them, to the religion, the religious ceremonial, and the morality now taught by the roman-catholic church*:—III. *Then consider your crimination of the Anglo-Saxon clergy, for their practices on the ignorance and credulity of the people*:—IV. *The doctrine taught in their monasteries; the misrepresentation of it by two eminent protestant writers*:—V. *And the miracles performed in the roman-catholic church.*

The Saxons of Ptolemy lay between the Oder and the Elbe; they afterwards extended themselves from the Elbe over the Ems, and reached Francia and Thuringia on the south. Harderick was the first of their kings whose name is known to us; he reigned ninety years before Christ. To him Hengist, who with his brother Horsia invaded England in 434, was fourteenth in succession. These princes, and their successors, made a complete conquest of England; they extirpated the pagan religion of Rome, established their own superstition throughout the island, and drove the Britons, who professed christianity, into Wales, Ireland and Scotland.

III. 1.

History of the Conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity.

SACRED history contains nothing more edifying than the account of the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons. "It has often been remarked as a pecu-
"liar merit of the christian religion, that it neither
"arose from ambition, nor was propagated by the
"sword. It appealed unoffendingly to the reason,
"the sensibility, the virtue, and the interest of
"mankind; and it established itself in every pro-
"vince of the Roman empire. When the torrent
"of barbarians overspread Europe, to the destruction
"of all arts and knowledge, christianity fell in the
"general wreck. Soon however in some districts
"she raised her mild and interesting form, and the
"savages yielded to her benign influence.

"Among the Anglo-Saxons, her conquest over
"the fierce and wild paganism, to which our an-
"cestors adhered, was not begun, till France, and
"even Ireland, had submitted to her laws; but it
"was accomplished in a manner worthy of her be-
"nevolence and purity.

"General piety seems to have led the first mis-
"sionaries to our shores; and the excellence of
"the system they diffused, made their labours
"successful."

With these expressions, our learned friend, Mr. Sharon Turner, introduces his account of

the propagation of christianity among the Anglo-Saxons*. I beg leave to transcribe doctor Fletcher's succinct history of this event†; nothing of my own could be more true, or would be so elegant. I transcribe it from one of the sermons, addressed by him to his congregation, at Weston-Underwood, in Buckinghamshire.

"About twelve hundred years ago, and above "nine hundred years before the introduction of "protestantism, Augustine, with his companions, "brought the light of faith into this island. They "derived their commission from the great, and "only acknowledged, source of spiritual autho-"rity; and in their faith and communion, they "were united with every orthodox community "of the christian universe. Their faith, my "brethren, was the same which you and I adore at "present. In their private and public characters, "they were men eminent for their virtues, prac-"tising, not only the precepts, but the counsels of "the gospel; despising all earthly satisfactions, and "attentive only to their own salvation, and to the "salvation of their neighbours. Their employ-"ments, when not engaged in the active occupa-"tions of their ministry, were prayer, watching, "penance, and mortification. As for their con-"duct in the sacred ministry, it was such as be-

* Turner's "History of the Anglo-Saxons," 2d edition, book xiii. c. 1.

† Doctor Fletcher's "Sermons on various Religious and "Moral Subjects," vol. 2. p. 14.

"came apostles,—men deputed, by the command "of Heaven, to convey the blessings of the gospel "to pagan nations. They preached, and acted, as "did once the first envoys of Jesus Christ. Fired "with the love of God, and animated with charity "to their fellow-men, they joined the ardour of zeal "to the tenderness of benevolence. They gained "proselytes, but it was by the eloquence of truth, "assisted by the eloquence of meekness, humility "and piety; verifying, in the whole series of their "conduct, that pleasing sentence of the prophet,— "'*How beautiful on the hills are the footsteps of* "'*those who bring glad tidings!*'"

"Neither were the exertions of their charity un- "attended by the approbation of Heaven. Not only "contemporary historians attest, but several pro- "testant writers allow, that God rewarded them "with the gift of miracles. Even the fierce enemy "of every thing that is catholic, the martyrologist "Fox, admits this fact,—a fact, which confirms "both the holiness of the lives of these apostles, "the lawfulness of their mission, and, by a most "logical inference, the truth of the holy religion "which they were labouring to establish. '*The* "'*King*,' says Fox, '*considered the honest con-* "'*versation of their lives, and was moved with* "'*the miracles wrought through God's hand by* "'*them**.'

"Under the influence of the sanction of such "authority, united to the influence of the methods

* Acts and Monuments, col. 2.

"by which these holy men propagated the maxims "of religion, it is easy to imagine what would be "the *fruits and effects* which resulted from them. "The fruits and effects were striking,—such pre-"cisely as that zeal is calculated to produce, which "is blessed by the approbation of Heaven. A "people, hitherto rude, savage, barbarous and im-"moral, was changed into a nation mild, benevolent, "humane and holy: '*Every thing*,' says Collier, "'*brightened, as if nature had been melted down* "'*and recoined.*'"

With these accounts of the conversion of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors, an English reader must be pleased. In eighty-two years from the arrival of St. Augustine, this mild, holy and beneficent religion, which he preached, was spread in every part of Anglo-Saxon England.

In the course of time the Anglo-Saxons themselves became missionaries; and, with the same edifying zeal and prudence which had distinguished their first apostles, carried the faith of Christ into many foreign nations, then involved in idolatry. In less than a century from the death of St. Augustine, the converts made by him preached the faith of Christ on the banks of the Oder, the Rhine and the Danube. St. Wilfrid preached the Gospel in Friesland; St. Willibrod to the Frisons; St. Boniface to the central and southern Germans, St. Willihad to the northern; his disciples to the Danes; St. Sigified to the Swedes; and Haco, the king of Norway, was assisted by Anglo-Saxon missionaries

in the conversion of his subjects. Many of these apostolical men suffered martyrdom in the exercise of their religious labours. In all these missions the preacher was either originally sent, or subsequently invested with missionary powers, by the see of Rome*.

An account of the literature and arts of the Anglo-Saxons is foreign to these pages: I invite all the readers of these letters to a perusal of what is said on this pleasing subject by doctor Lingard. They will acknowledge, that a much greater progress than could have been expected was made by the Anglo-Saxons in the sublimest sciences; in many useful and ornamental arts; and in almost every other pursuit that has a tendency to increase the well-being of mankind †.

III. 2.

Conformity of the Religion preached to the Anglo-Saxons, to that now taught by the Roman-catholic Church.

The religion of a nation may be divided into its creed, its ceremonial, and its morality.

1. The Apostles' *creed* was taught by the Anglo-Saxons as it is now taught to us. How large a proportion of the articles of their and our faith are contained in this venerable document! The doc-

* See doctor Lingard's Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church, c. 13.

† Ibid. c. 10. I have the greater pleasure in referring to doctor Lingard and Mr. Sharon Turner's works, on account of the authorities with which they always favour us.

trines of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors, respecting the supremacy of the pope; the real presence of Christ in the eucharist; the seven sacraments; the invocation of the Virgin Mary, and the other saints; and prayers for the dead, were the same as ours. Without entering upon any exposition or discussion of their creed, we beg leave to refer our readers to what has been written on this subject by doctor Lingard, in his Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, and by Mr. Manning, in his "England's Conversion and Reformation "compared †."

2. To the former of these authors we refer for indisputable proof, that there was no important difference between the religious *ceremonial* of the Anglo-Saxons, and that which now prevails in the roman-catholic church; and that, in points comparatively indifferent, there is as little variation between them, as might be expected from the natural change of every thing, that is of human institution, or of human management. Most protestants, (but too often in criminatory language), admit this fact. "What," says doctor Humphreys ‡, "did Gregory and Augustine bring into

* See doctor Lingard's Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church, c. 6, 7, 8, 9.

† Second Dialogue, s. 7, 8, 9.

‡ Jesuitismi, page 2.—Citations of passages to the same effect from writings of eminent protestant divines might easily be multiplied. Many are collected by father Persons in his "Three Conversions of England," part the 1st, c. 9, 10; and in Brerely's "Protestants Apology for the Roman Church," Tract 2, s. 1.

"England? Purgatory, the offering of the whole-
"some sacrifice, prayers for the dead, relics, tran-
"substantiation, &c. and the rest of the confused
"heap of popish superstitions."

3. The *morality*, which the apostolic missionaries taught their Anglo-Saxon flocks, was that of the gospel. I ask every candid protestant whether this does not incontestibly appear from the writings of the venerable Bede? May I not confidently call upon all, who are conversant with those valuable pages, to inform me whether the gospel inculcates a single duty, or recommends a single practice, which does not appear to have been taught and recommended by the apostles of the Anglo-Saxons, and their successors?

Much of what is said in the chapter of "the Book of the Church," which now engages our attention, respecting the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons by St. Augustine, will be read by every roman-catholic with pleasure; the following passage will be read by them with surprise and concern. You mention a vision, related to have been seen by Laurentius, one of the missionaries: "This," you affirm, "must be either miracle, "fraud, or fable. Many such there are in the "history of the Anglo-Saxon, as of every Romish "church; and it must be remembered, that, when "such stories are mere fables, they have, for the "most part, been feigned with the intent of serving "the interests of the Romish church, and promul-"gated, not as fiction, but as falsehood, with a "fraudulent mind. The legend which is here

" related, is probably a wonder of the second class. " The clergy of that age thought it allowable to " practise upon the ignorance and credulity of a " barbarous people, if by such means they might " bring forward the work of their conversion, " *or induce* them, when converted, to lead a more " religious life. Whether they thought thus or " not, it is certain that thus they acted; and it is " not less certain, that a system which admitted of " pious fraud, opened a way for the most impious " abuses." In the next chapter you say, " the mis- " sionaries were little scrupulous concerning the " measures which they employed, because they " were persuaded that any measures were justifiable " if they conduced to bring about the good end, " which was there aim."

Here we particularly lament your avowed plan of withholding from your readers, your authorities for your assertions. To support the charge which, in the passage I have cited, you make against the Anglo-Saxon clergy, it was incumbent upon you to bring authentic evidence to prove their having published or practised fictions in the manner you have described; to produce instances of it so numerous, as must justly fix the guilt on the general body of the Anglo-Saxon clergy; and to show that they acted on these occasions, not in consequence of the general weakness, or pravity of human nature, but under the impulse or sanction of their church or her doctrines.

Nothing of this kind have you brought forward:

all therefore that you say is mere accusation. To oppose, however, what you say, I shall transcribe a passage from one of the "Letters of the late "Mr. Alban Butler to Mr. Archibald Bower," the author of "the History of the Popes."—"It "is very unjust," says that very learned man, "to "charge the popes, or the catholic church, with "countenancing *knowingly* false legends; seeing "all the divines of that communion unanimously "condemn all such forgeries, as lies in things of "great moment, and grievous sins; and all the "councils, popes, and other bishops, have always "expressed the greatest horror of such villanies, "which no cause or circumstances whatever can "authorize, and which, in things relating to reli-"gion, are always of the most heinous nature. "Hence the authors, when detected, have been "always punished with the utmost severity.

"To instance examples of this nature would form "a complete history. For the church has always "most severely condemned all manner of forgeries*."

* Similar passages may be found in almost all the roman-catholic controversial writers. We prefer that, which we present to our readers, on account of the acknowledged learning and moderation of Mr. Alban Butler; the great esteem in which his writings are held by roman-catholics of every country, and the respect which was shown him by many protestant divines of our own, as doctor Lowth, doctor Keanicot, doctor Pearce, and doctor Lort; and because Mr. Alban Butler is the author of the "Lives of the Saints," a work of uncommon erudition and piety, and universally admired. Translations of it have appeared in the French, Italian and Spanish languages.

III. 3.

Doctrine taught in Monasteries,—great Misrepresentation of it by two eminent Protestant Writers.

If we credit doctor Robertson, "instead of aspiring to sanctity and virtue, which alone can render men acceptable to the great Author of Order and Excellence, the clergy imagined that they satisfied every obligation of duty, by a scrupulous observance of external ceremonies. Religion, according to their conception of it, comprehended nothing else; and the rites, by which they persuaded themselves that they could gain the favour of Heaven, were of such a nature as might have been expected from the rude ideas of the ages which devised and introduced them. They were either so unmeaning, as to be altogether unworthy of the Being to whose honour they were consecrated; or so absurd, as to be a disgrace to reason and humanity. All the religious maxims and practices of the dark ages," continues the royal historiographer in a note to this passage, "are a proof of this. I shall produce one remarkable testimony, in confirmation of it, from an author canonized by the church of Rome, St. Eloy, or Eligius, bishop of Noyon, in the seventh century. 'He is a good christian who comes frequently to church; who presents the oblation, which is offered unto God upon the altar; who doth not taste of the fruits of his own industry, until

" he has consecrated a part of them to God; who,
" when the holy festivals approach, lives chastely,
" even with his own wife, during several days, that
" with a safe conscience he may draw near to the
" altar of God; and who, in the last place, can re-
" peat the creed and the Lord's prayer. Redeem
" then your souls from destruction, while you have
" the means in your power; offer presents and
" tithes to churchmen; come more frequently to
" church; humbly implore the patronage of the
" saints; for, if you observe these things, you
" may come with security in the day to the tri-
" bunal of the Eternal Judge, and say, Give to
" us, O Lord! for we have given unto thee."
" (Dacherii Spicilegium veter. Script. v. ii. p. 94.)
" The learned and judicious translator of doctor
" Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, from one of
" whose additional notes I have borrowed this pas-
" sage, subjoins a very proper reflection: 'We see
" here a large and ample description of a good
" christian, in which there is not the least mention
" of the love of God, resignation to his will, obe-
" dience to his laws, or of justice, benevolence or
" charity towards men.' (Mos. Eccles. Hist. v. i.
" p. 324.)"

A charge, expressed in more direct or stronger terms against the clergy of the middle ages, for teaching a false and depraved system of morality, cannot be imagined. What then must be the surprise of the reader, when, from the perusal of the following passage in Mr. Lingard's learned and

elegant *Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church**, he finds the whole to be an absolute misrepresentation? "From that period," says Mr. Lingard,—referring to the publication of doctor Robertson's History,—"this citation from the writings of St. "Eloy, or St. Eligius, has held a very distinguished "place in every invective which has been published "against the clergy of former ages: and the defi-"nition of the good christian has been re-echoed "a thousand times by the credulity of writers, and "their readers. May I hope to escape the impu-"tation of scepticism, when I own that I have "always been inclined to mistrust this host of wit-"nesses, and their quotations? I at last resolved "to consult the original document; nor were my "expectations disappointed. I discovered that the "bishop of Noyon had been foully calumniated; "and that, instead of his real doctrine, a garbled "extract had been presented to the public. That "the good christian should pay the dues of the "church, he indeed requires; but he also requires, "that he should cultivate peace among his neigh-"bours; forgive his enemies; love all mankind as "himself; observe the precepts of the decalogue; "and faithfully comply with the engagements "which he contracted at his baptism."

We insert the text of the bishop in a note†.

* P. 91, note (B.)

† "Non ergo vobis sufficit, clarissimi, quod christianum "nomen accepistis; si opera christiana non facitis. Illi "enim prodest, quod christianus vocatur, qui semper Christi "precepta mente retinet, et opere perficit; qui furtum, sci-

The following is Mr. Lingard's translation of it: "It does not, therefore, most dear christians, suffice to you, that you have received the christian "name, unless you do christian works. For to "him it avails to be called a christian, who always "keeps in his mind the precepts of Christ, and fulfils them by his works. Such is he, who does "not steal; who does not bear false witness; who "does not lie, or forswear; who does not commit "adultery; who hateth no one, but loveth all as "himself; who does not return evil to his enemies, "but rather prayeth for them; who does not raise "quarrels, but recals quarrellers to peace. On "account of its similarity," continues Mr. Lingard, "I shall subjoin another description of the good "christian from an Anglo-Saxon prelate, Wulstan, "archbishop of York:—'Let us always profess one "true faith, and love God with all our mind and "might; and carefully keep all his command-"ments, and give to God that part (of our sub-"stance), which by his grace we are able to give; "and earnestly avoid all evil, and act righteously "to all others; that is, behave to others as we "wish others to behave to us. He is a good chris-"tian who observeth this*.'"

"licet, non facit; qui falsum testimonium non dicit; qui nec "mentitur, nec pejerat; qui adulterium non committit; qui "nullum hominem odit, sed omnes, sicut semetipsum, dili-"git; qui inimicis suis malum non reddit, sed magis pro "ipsis orat; qui lites non concitat, sed discordes ad concor-"diam revocat, &c." Dach. Spicil. tom. v. p. 213.

* Sermo Lupi episc. ap. Whil. p. 487.

Such was the doctrine taught in the monasteries. May it not be confidently asked, whether it be not the morality of the gospel? Whether any purer lessons of morality can be cited? and whether the institutions in which it was taught, and without which it might not have been taught, were not, with all the imperfections justly or unjustly imputed to them, eminently useful to the community?

III. 4.

Miracles performed by the Anglo-Saxon Missionaries.

In this, and in many other parts of the work before us, you treat the miracles, performed by members of the roman-catholic church, with contempt and ridicule. The present is not a place for a full discussion of this important topic: I shall, therefore, only present you,—1. With a short exposition of the roman-catholic doctrine upon it:—2. With some observations suggested by the conflicting arguments of doctor Middleton, and his adversaries, in the controversy upon miracles, which took place between them towards the middle of the last century:—3. And with some general observations on the credibility of the miracles, which are related to have been wrought in the roman-catholic church during the middle ages.

1. It is known, that roman-catholics, relying with entire confidence on the promises of Christ, believe, that *the power of working miracles was given by Christ to his church, and that it never*

has been, and never will be, withdrawn from her. Through the prophet Joel *, God announced to the Jews, that "in the last days he would pour "out his spirit on all flesh;" that "their sons "and their daughters should prophecy;" that "their young men should see visions, and their "old men dream dreams." When St. Peter cited this prophecy to the Jews, assembled at the feast of Pentecost, he declared to them, that the promise contained in it "was made to them, to "their children, and to all that were afar off, "whom the Lord God should call †." Christ, in his last sermon, after exhorting St. Philip to believe in him as God, equal to his Father; and after appealing to his works, as the testimony given by his Father to this truth, expressed himself in the following solemn terms: "Verily! verily! "I say unto you, he that believeth in me, the works "that I do, these shall he do, and greater works "than these he shall also do ‡." When, just before his ascension into heaven, Christ took his last leave of his apostles, and gave them his last blessing, he mentioned to them the signs which should follow those who believed: "In my name," he said, "they shall cast out devils; they shall speak "with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; "and, if they eat any thing deadly, it shall not "hurt them; they shall lay their hands on the "sick, and they shall be cured ||."

* Chap. ii. 29, 30.
† Acts, ii. 39.
‡ John, xiv. 12, 13.
|| Mark, xvi. 17, 18.

Here roman-catholics confidently ask:—Did not Christ promise by these words, that miracles should be wrought in his church? That they should be wrought without limitation of time? That some of these should be greater than his own?

To say that the promise failed would be impiety. Somewhere, therefore, miracles must have been uninterruptedly wrought. Now, the roman-catholic is the only church, which, from the first propagation of christianity until the present time, has had a visible and uninterrupted existence: uninterrupted miracles, therefore, could only have existed in the roman-catholic church. They could not possibly have existed in any church, which separated from the see of Rome *at the time of the Reformation*; for, to use an expression of Bossuet, in his controversy with M. Claude, "when the "church of the reformers first separated from the "one, the holy, the roman-catholic church, their "church could not by their own confession enter "into communion with a single church in the "whole world."

2. The general position, that a constant succession of miracles in a church is a proof of the truth of its religious creed, seems to be universally admitted. "It is," says doctor Middleton, in his Free Enquiry*, "a maxim, which must be "allowed by all christians, that whenever any "sacred rite or religious institution becomes the

* 3d edition, p. I. XVI.

"instrument of miracles, we ought to consider that "rite as confirmed by divine approbation."

It necessarily follows, that if roman-catholics prove a constant succession of miracles in their church, they consequently establish the truth of her doctrine.

Aware of this inference, the protestant divines found it incumbent on them to contend, that at some period in the christian æra, there was a cessation of miracles in the christian church. Being required to specify this æra, they answered that it was when the corruption of christianity became general. They were then required to specify the period when this general corruption took place. Here a considerable disagreement was found among them. Some assigned it to the fourth, some to the fifth, some even to the sixth century; but the generality assigned it to the conversion of the emperor Constantine. Then, according to their system, christianity became the religion of the state; and, being supported by the secular arm, the christians no longer put their trust in God, and a general corruption of christianity ensued. From this time, therefore, the Almighty ceased to recognize their church, and withdrew from her the supernatural powers, with which, till then, He had invested her.

Such is the account which protestant writers give of the supposed æra of the corruption of christianity. It is evident, that whatever may be the period which they assign for it, there must be error in the

assignment, if miracles were subsequently wrought in the catholic church, as it never can be supposed that the Almighty would work miracles in the support of a corrupted church. Now, the roman-catholics produce a regular chain of miracles, wrought in every subsequent age of christianity. Then, as the protestants admit the existence of miracles, in the ages which preceded the æra assigned by them for the corruption of christianity, it became incumbent upon them to disprove the miracles alleged by the roman-catholics to have been wrought in the subsequent ages; and this they could only do, by showing that the evidence for them was not so strong as the evidence adduced in support of the miracles wrought in the preceding ages, and allowed and credited by themselves.

Here doctor Middleton intervened. It is, by his account, impossible for protestants to show, that miracles ceased at any of the æras assigned by them, as the catholics, in his judgment, can incontrovertibly demonstrate, that the sanctity, the talents, and the discernment of those, on whose testimony the miracles in the subsequent ages depended, were not inferior to the sanctity, the talents, and discernment of those whose testimony for the miracles of the preceding ages the protestants themselves accepted, and pronounced to be sufficient. "As far as the church historians "can illustrate or throw light upon any thing, "there is not," says doctor Middleton*, "a single

* Intl. xv. xvi.

"point in history, so constantly, explicity, and "unanimously affirmed by them all, as the con- "tinual succession of these powers, through all "ages, from the earliest father who mentions them, "down to the time of the Reformation; which "same succession is still further deduced by per- "sons of the most eminent character for their "probity, learning, and dignity in the Romish "church to this very day. So that the only doubt "which can remain with us is, whether the church "historians are to be trusted or not; for if any "credit be due to them in the present case, it "must reach either to all, or to none; because the "reason for believing them, in any one age, will "be found to be of equal force in all, as far as it "depends on the characters of the persons attesting, "or the nature of the things attested."

Pursuing his argument, doctor Middleton confined the power of working miracles, to the apostolic age. According to his system, it was bestowed on the apostles, and during the lives of the apostles on others; but it ceased entirely on the decease of all the apostles, and never more appeared in the christian world. After generally noticing the miracles of the six first ages, "I see nothing," says this learned and acute writer*, "which can stop "the progress from the sixth age down to the "present, from pope Gregory the Great to pope "Clement the Twelfth; for each succeeding age "will furnish miracles, and witnesses too of as

* Intr. I. XXXII. XCVI.

"good credit as those of the sixth. Grant the "Romanist but a single age of miracles after the "times of the apostles we shall be entangled in a "series of difficulties, whence we can never fairly "extricate ourselves, unless we allow the same "powers also to the present age."

Such was doctor Middleton's system, respecting the miracles wrought in the christian church. He supported it in the work, which we have mentioned, with great ability. It gave considerable alarm: an host of divines rose in arms again him; and a controversial war ensued. The assailants displayed learning and talent; but, when doctor Middleton asked the overwhelming question,—What greater right to credit does the testimony admitted by you possess, than the testimony which you reject? it must be admitted that he received no satisfactory answer.

On the other hand, when the adversaries of doctor Middleton turned upon him, and asked,—Why greater credit should be given to the writers of the apostolic age, than to the writers of the succeeding ages? this question was found to be equally overwhelming; and the doctor could never be brought to give it a direct answer. If he answered it, in consistency with the opinions which he himself avowed, and attempted to enforce against his adversaries, he must have said, that the apostolic and the succeeding writers were entitled to the same degree of credit. From this it would have followed, that, as he thought the succeeding writers

entitled to no credit, neither did he think the apostolic writers entitled to any. This, it was evident, would sap the very foundations of christianity. Aware of this, doctor Middleton always evaded the question. This did not escape the observation, either of his adversaries, or of the general observers of the controversy; and it thus became almost an universal opinion, that his "Free Enquiry" was virtually, and perhaps intentionally, an attack upon all miracles, and through them, on christianity itself.

"Doctor Middleton's undertaking," says Mr. Chalmers in his Biographical Dictionary, "justly "alarmed the clergy, and all friends to religion; "since it was impossible to succeed, without taint-"ing, in some degree, the scripture miracles. They "thought, too, that even the canon of scripture "must not be a little affected, if the fathers, on "whose credit the authenticity of its books in some "measure depended, were so utterly despised."

It is true that doctor Middleton might have answered, that the difference between the apostolic writers, so far at least as the case rested between the writers of the New Testament, and the writers in after-times, was, that the former were inspired; and that all they related was, therefore, necessarily true. But this answer would only have removed the difficulty by a single step. In reply to it, the doctor's adversaries would have asked,—On what he considered the evidence of the inspiration of the New Testament, or even the evidence

of the authenticity of a single copy of it to rest?—To the question, doctor Middleton must have answered,—on human testimony. The overwhelming question would then have immediately followed,—What right to credit does the testimony for it possess, upon your principles, that is not possessed, in an equal degree, by the testimony in favour of the miracles of every age?—in favour even of some which you so superciliously reject? To this question doctor Middleton could have made no reply.

Such was the result of this celebrated controversy. It produced a great sensation, and made impressions which have not been obliterated.

In general, roman-catholics kept aloof from it. They perceived how greatly it served their cause. They thought it clear, that,—when doctor Middleton proved, against his antagonists, that the evidence brought by them in support of the miracles, which they allowed was not greater than the evidence produced for the miracles which they rejected,—he completely established the roman-catholic doctrine of the uninterrupted succession of miracles in their church: and that, on the other hand,—when the adversaries of doctor Middleton proved against him, that the inspiration of the New Testament, and even the authenticity of its text, could only be proved by testimony,—they completely established the roman-catholic doctrine of tradition.

It does not appear from the "Book of the Church," whether, in respect to the point under

consideration, we should class you with doctor Middleton, or with doctor Middleton's antagonists. If with the former, we wish you to explain, in some future edition of your work, in what manner, without resorting to *tradition*, it can be proved that the sacred writings are inspired; and, therefore, entitled to the superior credit which doctor Middleton claimed for them:—If with the latter, we wish to see your reasons for preferring the miracles, which preceded the period assigned by the antagonists of the doctor for the cessation of miracles, to those which followed that period.

But,—while the roman-catholics assert, that it has pleased Almighty God to work in every age, from the first preaching of the gospel to the present time, many and incontestible miracles in favour of his church and her doctrines, they admit, without qualification, that no *miracles, except those which are related in the Old or the New Testament*, are articles of faith; that a person may disbelieve every other miracle, and may even disbelieve the existence of the persons, through whose intercession they are related to have been wrought, without ceasing to be a roman-catholic. This is equally agreeable to religion and common sense; for all miracles, which are not recorded in holy writ, depend on human reasoning. Now, human reasoning being always fallible, all miracles depending on it rest on fallible proof; and, consequently, may be untrue. Hence the divines of the roman-catholic church never impose the belief of particular mira-

cles, either upon the body of the faithful or upon individuals; they only recommend the belief of them. They never recommend the belief of any, the credibility of which does not appear to them to be supported by evidence of the highest nature; and, while they contend that the evidence is of this description, and cannot, therefore, be rationally disbelieved, they admit that it is still no more than human testimony, and therefore liable to error. Doctor Milner rejects*, in the wholesale, the miracles related in the "Golden Legend" of Jacobus de Voragine; those related in the "Speculum", of Vincentius Belluacensis; and those related in the "Saints Lives" of the patrician Metaphiastes: no roman-catholic gives credit to those which rest on Surius, or Monbritius. Doctor Lingard† calls Osbert, the biographer of St. Dunstan, and the writer of his life, "an injudicious biographer, whose "anile credulity collected and embellished every "fable." Doctor Lingard, also, while he asserts‡ that there are many miracles in the Anglo-Saxon times, which it would require no small ingenuity to disprove, and incredulity to discredit, admits that "there are also many which must shrink from the "frown of criticism; some, which may have been "the effect of accident or imagination; some, that "are more calculated to excite the smile than the "wonder of the readers; and some, which, on what-

* End of Controversy, Letter XXIV.

† Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church, c. xii. n. 6.

‡ Ibid. c. ix.

"ever ground they were originally admitted, de-
"pend, at the present, on the distant testimony of
"writers, not remarkable for sagacity or discrimi-
"nation. It was their misfortune," says the same excellent writer, "that the knowledge of these "writers of miracles was not equal to their piety. "Of their censors, it may sometimes be said, that "their piety was not equal to their knowledge."

This exposition of the roman-catholic doctrine respecting miracles has been often given. May I not ask, if it be either just or generous to harass the present catholics with the weaknesses of the antient writers of their communion; and to attempt to render their religion and themselves odious by these unceasing and offensive repetitions?

In a sermon, preached before queen Elizabeth, doctor Jewell, "the learned, venerated, and autho-
"rized organ of the protestant church," as he is called by the bishop of St. David's, represented to her majesty, that "witches and sorcerers won-
"derfully increased;" that "her majesty's sub-
"jects pined away until death;" that "their "colours faded, their flesh rottened, their speech "was removed, and their senses bereft." In consequence of this representation, her majesty and the lords spiritual and temporal, in parliament assembled, made witchcraft felony. Numbers suffered upon it in that and subsequent reigns. What would a protestant think of a roman-catholic who should now revile the church of England, on account of this sermon, and the act of parliament which

followed it; and should attempt to identify them with the actual doctrines of the established church? By parity of reason, may not a roman-catholic justly complain, when a protestant brings forward the miserable story of St. Dunstan pinching the devil's nose, and other tales of this sort; and represents them as forming part of the faith or doctrines of the catholic church?

Surely it is time that this kind of contention should cease. If there must be controversy between catholics and protestants, let it always be the controversy of scholars and gentlemen:—such controversy as was waged between Laud and Fisher; between Chillingworth and Knott:—such as we find in the elegant letters of father Scheffmacher; and the learned treatise of doctor Isaac Barrow. Such, in fine, as we meet with in doctor Milner's "Letters "to a Prebendary," and in his "End of Contro-"versy:" I have greatly availed of these in the letters which I now have the honour to address to you. I particularly recommend the perusal of them to you and every protestant, who sincerely wishes to be informed of our religious tenets, of the arguments by which we support them, and of the history of the English roman-catholics since the Reformation.

LETTER IV.

CAUSES WHICH PROMOTED THE SUCCESS OF CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE ANGLO-SAXONS.

SIR,

THIS is an important chapter. A roman-catholic will peruse with pleasure the ample tribute of commendation which you pay, in parts of it, to the conduct of the roman missionaries; to the doctrine which they preached; and to the manner in which they preached it. Still you are sometimes unjust to them. On these parts of the chapter I shall offer some observations: I shall attempt to show,—I. That the conduct of the missionaries was, under Providence, the chief cause of their success in preaching the gospel:—II. I shall notice an unfounded charge brought by you, in this chapter, against the Anglo-Saxon clergy:—And III. examine your assertion, that the faith of the Welch was purer than that taught by St. Augustine to the Anglo-Saxons.

IV. 1.

The Conduct of the Missionaries was, under Providence, the chief Cause of their Success.

You ask, why "christianity should have been "established so early, and with such little struggle "in England, seeing that its introduction into "heathen countries has, in later centuries, been "found so exceedingly difficult, as at one time to be "generally considered hopeless, and almost impos-"sible, without a miracle?" You assign for its

early and quiet establishment among the Anglo-Saxons several natural causes. I coincide with you in opinion, that all the causes you mention were favourable to the introduction and propagation of christianity in England.

Several natural causes had, in like manner, been favourable to its introduction and propagation in the Roman world. All history shows, that the wisdom of Providence frequently uses the circumstances of mankind as instruments for its purposes; and thus frequently accomplishes its designs, partially at least, by human means.

But was not the success of the Anglo-Saxon apostles principally owing, under Providence, to their correspondence with the graces and gifts, which it pleased the Almighty to bestow upon them? None of the circumstances mentioned by you to have been favourable to the introduction and extension of the gospel among the Anglo-Saxons, existed in some of the countries in which it was preached by St. Augustine's disciples; yet the success of the disciples was every where equal to the success of their Master. Should it not, therefore, be chiefly attributed to their having possessed the same virtues?

In how many portions of the habitable globe have roman-catholic missions, even under the most discouraging circumstances, been attended with equal success? In opposition to the ruling powers, and often under severe persecutions, countless conversions have been made by roman-catholic mis-

sionaries in Madeira, Cochin-china, Tonquin, the empire of China, the peninsula of Corea; among the Hurons, Miamis, Illinois, and other tribes of North America; among the savages of Paraguay, Uraguay and Panama; among the wild Moxos, Chiquits and Canizians. All these countries have been watered with the blood of roman-catholic missionaries; and, to use the well-known expression of Tertullian, "their blood became the seed of the church."

IV. 2.

Unfounded Charge brought in this Chapter against the Anglo-Saxon Clergy.

TOWARDS the middle of this chapter*, you broadly describe the missionaries, as "politic in "contrivance; little scrupulous concerning the "measures which they employed, because they "were persuaded that any measures were justifiable, "if they conduced to bring about the good end "which was their aim."

You must admit, that the principle which you impute in this place to the Anglo-Saxon missionaries is most nefarious, and fraught with the worst consequences. You must also admit, that a charge of this nature, when it is brought against an individual, can only be proved by producing either his own acknowledgment of it, or else such facts as establish it by just inference; and that, when it is

* Vol. 1, p. 55, 56.

brought against a body of men, it can only be proved by producing a multiplicity of such acknowledgments, or a multiplicity of such facts. But in the present case, where are these acknowledgments? Where are these facts?

IV. 3.

Alleged purer Faith of the Welch.

"THE Saxons," you inform us, "received chris-
"tianity with its latest ceremonials, additions, and
"doctrinal corruptions. The Welch were possessed
"of a purer faith."

But can the slightest evidence of their purer faith be produced? Gildas, who was himself a Welchman, and a contemporary with St. Augustine, censures, in the strongest terms, the morals of the clergy of Wales, and their neglect of clerical duty. Is it then likely, that their faith should have been purer than that of St. Augustine? Add to this, that one of St. Augustine's demands of the Welch was, that they should join him, and his companions, in preaching the word of God to the pagans*: Would he have made this demand if there had not been the strictest unity of faith between himself and the clergy of Wales? His only other demands were, that they should adopt the Roman ritual in the administration of baptism; observe the computation of Easter, used in every other part of Christendom; and submit to the metropolitan juris-

* Doctor Lingard's Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church, p. 2.

diction over them, which the pope had conferred upon him. All the demands of St. Augustine were refused. From this you infer, that their religious creed differed from that of the Roman see, and and give to their's a decided preference. I beg leave to observe, that the difference between the baptismal rite observed by the Welch, and the rite which St. Augustine required them to observe, was a mere difference in form, not a difference in substance; that the difference between them in the computation of Easter, respected an observance in which no point of faith was implicated; and that their refusal to acknowledge St. Augustine for their archbishop and metropolitan, was no greater assertion of the independence of their church, on an *intermediate prelate*, than in every æra of christianity, and in every part of the christian world, roman-catholic prelates of the fairest fame, recognized by the see of Rome to be in communion with her, and unequivocally acknowledging her supremacy, have strenuously asserted against her in points of local discipline. It should be added, that the Welch, notwithstanding these differences, were always in communion with the see of Rome; and, at no very distant period, conformed, in all the points which have been mentioned, to the general discipline of the roman-catholic church.

LETTER V.

RELIGION OF THE DANES—THEIR CONVERSION.

SIR,

IN this chapter you give an account of the mythology of the Scandinavian nations. It gives me pleasure to mention it with unqualified praise; and to add, that having many years ago paid particular attention to this subject, and presented the result to the public *, I now find, with pleasure, that it coincides altogether with that which the public actually receive from your much-abler pen.

In this chapter, the piracy of the Danes is properly noticed. Mr. Sharon Turner's account of the sea-kings, and of Vitingr of the North, in his History of the Anglo-Saxons †, is singularly interesting.

I cannot refuse myself the pleasure of transcribing the account which, in the chapter now before me, you give of the blessings diffused over all Scandinavia, by the propagation of christianity in those extensive regions. "By the policy, the "steady system of the popes, the admirable zeal "of the Benedictines, and by the blessing of God, "which crowned all, the whole of the Scandina-"vian nations were converted, about the time of "the Norman Conquest; and thus an end was

* Horæ Biblicæ, part 2. The Edda.
† Page 68.

" put to those religions which made war their princi-
" ple, and, sanctifying the most atrocious and cursed
" actions, had the misery of mankind for their end."
In a former page * you remark, that " to the ser-
" vile part of the community the gospel was indeed
" tidings of great joy; frequently they were eman-
" cipated, either in the first fervor of the owner's
" conversion, or as an act of atonement, and meri-
" torious charity, at death." For these expres-
sions, I most sincerely thank you: but I must
entreat you to keep in mind, that the conversions
you speak of, and which you describe to have been
attended with so many spiritual and so many tem-
poral blessings, were conversions effected by roman-
catholic missionaries to the roman-catholic faith.
Can such a faith deserve a harsh word?

* Vol. 1, book 2, c. 2, p 203.

LETTER VI.

THE ANGLO-SAXON CHURCH—ST. DUNSTAN.

SIR,

AN attentive perusal of what doctor Lingard has written in his Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church, and of what the same author, and Mr. Sharon Turner, have said in their respective histories of England,—and an examination of all the authorities adduced by them,—have convinced me, that St. Dunstan is entitled to the praise of probity, talent, and true religion. Such was the opinion of every writer, whose works have reached us, from the time in which St. Dunstan lived, till the æra of the Reformation. Then, without the discovery of a single new fact, that could justify a change of opinion, St. Dunstan became an object of the most contumelious abuse; and, since that time, it has been always on the increase. You now describe him as a perfect monster:—differing from you in this regard, I request your particular attention to this letter. I shall mention,—I. The early years of St. Dunstan:—II. His conduct towards king Edwin:—III. His conduct towards king Edgar:—IV. His enforcing the celibacy of the clergy:—V. His introduction of the Benedictine monks in the room of the secular canons:—And VI. His miracles.

VI. 1.

Early Years of St. Dunstan.

His family was noble. All historians agree, that his education was suitable to his birth; that his proficiency, both in sacred and profane literature, was great; that he was eminently skilled in the elegant arts of music, painting, engraving, and working in metals; and that his knowledge, and exemplary conduct, made him universally respected and beloved, and destined him, in public opinion, to the highest dignities, and most important employments. While he was thus rapidly advancing to distinction, he fell into disgrace at court, and was visited by a long illness. In these serious hours, he determined to embrace a religious life; and, sometime after his recovery, received the order of priesthood, and with it the monastic habit. He was attached to the parish church of Glastonbury; still he lived in retirement, and devoted, in an obscure and humble cell, all the time which his parochial duties left at his disposal, to prayer and penitential austerities. He distributed his own fortune, and a considerable property which had been bequeathed to him, between his church and the poor. His virtues attracted the attention of Edmund, his sovereign: he conferred on him the royal palace and manor of Glastonbury, and appointed him abbot of the adjoining convent of Benedictine monks.

Edred, the brother and successor of Edmund, showed him the same favour. Edred was succeeded by Edwin, a dissolute youth, then in his fourteenth year.

Such was the early life of Dunstan. Modern writers profess to discover in it strong indications of hypocrisy, turbulence, and ambition. To me these are invisible, unless it be certain that a person, who retires in his youth from the dignities and gaudes of the world, spends many years in privacy and humble occupations, and afterwards attains great dignities in the church, must necessarily hence have been hypocritical, turbulent, and ambitious in his youth.

VI. 2.

The Conduct of St. Dunstan towards King Edwin.

At the time of which we are now writing, two women, Ethelgiva, and Elgiva her daughter, frequented the monarch's court. "The former," says an antient writer, "was of high rank, but "silly. She followed the king every where, and "endeavoured, by familiar and shameful blandishments, to induce him to unite himself to "her, or to her daughter, by the tie of marriage; "Shameful to relate, each submitted to the monarch's will." Decency compels us to suppress the rest of the scandalous narrative. On the day of his coronation, the monarch, the clergy, and the nobility, assembled, as was customary on this

occasion, at a sumptuous feast. In the midst of some serious discourse, the monarch suddenly rose from the table, and hurried into an adjoining apartment. There, Ethelgiva and Elgiva awaited him. The assembled ecclesiastics and nobles felt themselves insulted; they expressed their indignation by a general murmur; and unanimously commanded Dunstan and Kinsey, a prelate of royal blood, to repair to the apartment, and bring back the monarch, willing or unwilling, to his seat. Kinsey and Dunstan found the sovereign in a situation which it would be offensive to our readers to describe, and his royal crown on the floor. The monarch was unwilling to quit the scene of infamy. Dunstan strongly represented to him the consequences of his conduct; dragged him from the embraces of the women; placed the crown upon his head; and returned with him to the banquet.* It is surprising that the conduct of Dunstan, on this occasion, should be the subject of modern blame. The monarch had outraged decency; the clergy and nobles were irritated; and the worst consequences might have followed. Dunstan brought back the unwise youth to the assembly, and thus stifled the discontent.

But his conduct was resented, both by the king and Ethelgiva. He was banished from the court, confined to his monastery, and threatened with personal violence. Then, with the permission of

* See Lingard's Hist. Vol. I. Note (A), 2. 543.

the earl of Flanders, he retired to the monastery of St. Peter at Ghent; but Edwin and Ethelgiva pursued their vengeance against him. His two abbeys of Glastonbury and Abingdon were dissolved, and the monks expelled from them. Edwin continued his connexions with Ethelgiva: the Wittenagemot, which was both the supreme council, and the supreme judicial tribunal of the nation, took cognizance of it, and threatened Ethelgiva with ignominious punishment, if she should persist in her scandalous conduct. She paid no attention to their representations, and the scandal continued. By the direction of the Wittenagemot, she was branded with a hot iron, and conveyed out of the kingdom. The public discontent increased: all the provinces on the north of the Humber revolted, and transferred their allegiance to Edgar, the brother of Edwin.

A civil war ensued: Ethelgiva returned from her banishment, but was seized and murdered by a party of the insurgent soldiers. To put an end to the distraction of the nation, the Wittenagemot interfered, and divided the kingdom between the two brothers. On the death of Edwin, which happened soon after this event, Edgar became the sole possessor of the Anglo-Saxon throne. Modern historians have worked the misfortunes of Ethelgiva and Elgiva into a very tragic tale, and described Dunstan as the author of their calamities; but must not all who read doctor Lingard's account of

them, and examine his authorities, acknowledge that the tale is considerably embellished, and wholly acquit Dunstan of having acted any part in it? During the whole of these proceedings, Dunstan was in Flanders.

VI. 3.

The Conduct of St. Dunstan towards King Edgar.

From the time of his being sent into banishment, till the death of Edwin, Dunstan remained abroad. One of the earliest acts of king Edgar, after the death of his brother, was to recal Dunstan. After his return, he was successively promoted to the bishoprics of Worcester and London, and to the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury.

Edgar uniformly displayed great talents for government; but he too often yielded to his passions. It is a strong argument in favour of the historical fidelity of the monastic writers, that, although Edgar was one of their greatest benefactors, all of them have represented his vices and follies in the strongest colours. On one occasion Edgar violated, in a convent, a lady of noble birth, who resided among the nuns. After the first ferment of his passion had subsided, Dunstan waited on the monarch, and pointed out to him the enormity of his crime: Edgar submitted both to the prelate's admonitions, and to the penance imposed by him. The prelate enjoined him to abstain, during ten

years, from wearing his crown; and to observe a rigorous fast during two days in every week; to distribute large alms among the poor; to publish a code of laws for the more impartial administration of justice; and to transmit, at his own expense, to the different counties of the Anglo-Saxon monarchy, copies of the holy scriptures. These salutary severities restored the monarch to a sense of his duty, and to the esteem of his people. It seems difficult to contend with success, that the conduct of Dunstan, on this occasion, is not entitled to unqualified commendation.

VI. 4.

St. Dunstan's Regulations for the Celibacy of the Clergy.

One of the first measures adopted by St. Dunstan, to effect a reformation of the discipline of the Anglo-Saxon church, was to restore the celibacy of the clergy.

The roman-catholic church considers the married state to be honourable; but, in conformity to the doctrine repeatedly announced by Christ and his apostles, she prefers to it the state of virginity. She also considers, that many things in the married state are impediments to the perfect discharge of the duties of the sacred ministry; and has, therefore, enjoined, that the clergy should observe continence. It is always better to cite one than many authorities: I beg leave, therefore, to refer you,

and all my readers who wish for complete information on this subject, to the dissertation upon it, which doctor Milner has inserted in his excellent "History of Winchester." I believe that, if they peruse it impartially, they will think it abundantly demonstrates, that bishops, priests and deacons were obliged, from the very infancy of the church, to observe the law of continency; and that, towards the end of the sixth century, this law was introduced, with christianity itself, by St. Augustine and his companions, among our Anglo-Saxon ancestors. How can those who contest this fact get over, either the unanimous resolution of the fathers assembled at the second council of Carthage, in favour of this article of catholic discipline? Or their unanimous testimony, that it was taught by the apostles? The clergy of the established church of England were first allowed to marry by an act passed in the second year of the reign of Edward VI. It is not a little remarkable, that the preamble to this very act states, "that it would be better for the "estimation of priests, and also for the administra-"tion of the gospel, for them to live chaste." Queen Elizabeth's dislike of the marriages of priests is known to you, and every person of learning. They, therefore, who express themselves harshly upon this doctrine, should a little consider, that the catholic doctrine, which they now so strongly reprobate, was favoured by many, who are actual objects of their incessant praise.

But although the dissertation, to which we have

referred, should fail to prove to our readers the very high antiquity, or the universal prevalence which it assigns to the law for the celibacy of the clergy, can any dispassionate person blame St. Dunstan for enforcing it, if he considers the great length of time during which it has been not only approved, but thought an essential point of christian discipline in every age, and in every country, by persons of distinguished character; and that, before the doctrines of the reformation were propagated, neither the doctrine itself, nor the manner in which it was established, was ever a subject even of the slightest obloquy? Generally speaking, the characters of eminent persons should be estimated, not by the maxims of another age, but by the maxims of their own; and, where their conduct cannot be wholly approved of, great indulgence should be shown to it, when it appears to have been approved by the good and the wise of their own time.

VI. 5.

St. Dunstan's Substitution of the Benedictine Monks to the Secular Canons.

You, and other protestant writers, represent this as a deed of extreme injustice; as a crafty design to increase the power of the sovereign pontiff, by placing the whole ecclesiastical economy of the kingdom in the hands of the regulars, a body of ecclesiastics pre-eminently devoted to the pontiff, and absolutely subject to his control.

Archbishop Parker and those, who join him in

this representation, describe the secular clergy of these times as honourable men, respectable ministers of the church, and guilty of no crime, but that of living piously in legitimate marriage. The description given of them by their contemporaries, and by the writers in the period which immediately followed it, is very different. You yourself represent the clergy of Dunstan's age as "grossly "ignorant, and partaking of the coarse dissolute "manners of their countrymen." After this concession, supported as it is by the concurrent testimony which we have mentioned, there is strong reason to suppose that the corruption, complained of, could only be removed by strong measures. The substitution of the Benedictine monks to the secular canons was certainly a measure of this description. It met with great opposition: two councils were held upon it. "Dunstan,"—you intimate,—"*took care* that the third, which was "held at Calne, *should be decisive*. The king was "kept away, on account of his youth, though he "had been present at the former meetings. Beornelm, a Scottish bishop, pleaded the cause of the "clergy with great ability; alleging scripture in "their behalf, and custom; and arguing upon the "morality and reason of the case, against the celi-"bacy, to which by these new laws they were to be "compelled. His speech produced a great effect; "and Dunstan did not attempt to answer it: he "had laid aside," says his biographer, "all his "means but prayer. You endeavour," said he,

" to overcome me, who am now growing old, and " disposed to silence rather than contention. I con- " fess that I am unwilling to be overcome; and " I commit the cause of the church to Christ him- " self, as judge. No sooner had these words been " spoken, than the beams and rafters gave way; " that part of the floor, on which the clergy and " their friends were arranged, fell with them; many " were killed in the fall, and others grievously hurt; " but the part where Dunstan and his friends had " taken their seats remained firm."

A more atrocious crime than the charge which you thus bring against Dunstan cannot be imagined. Now every canon of history, even the common duty of charity, requires that such an imputation should not be brought without strong evidence. The slightest evidence neither has been, nor can be produced, for its support. That a council was held at Calne; that, during its sitting, the floor fell in; that the ecclesiastics, the nobles, and the other members who attended it, were cast into the ruin; that several lost their lives, or were materially injured; and that Dunstan remained unhurt by standing on a beam, are the only circumstances which history has transmitted to us. Of the diabolical contrivance of the tragedy by Dunstan, no proof whatever has been suggested.

Nothing can be more unfavourable to the memory of Dunstan than your account of him. I apprehend that the readers of the preceding pages, and still more those, who have perused doctor Lingard's account of him, in his Antiquities of the Anglo-

Saxon Church, and in his History of England, particularly if they have consulted the authorities cited by him, in the last of these works, have come to a very different conclusion, and consider St. Dunstan as an ornament to his religion and his country.

VI. 6.

The Miracles of St. Dunstan.

You conclude the present chapter with an account of the miracles "at the death of Dunstan." You thus express yourself upon them: "Whether the "miracles at the death of St. Dunstan were ac- "tually performed by the monks, or only averred "by them as having been wrought, either in their "own sight, or in that of their predecessors, there "is the same fraudulent purpose, the same audacity "of imposture, and the same irrefragable proofs "of that system of deceit, which the romish church "carried on every where till the time of the Re- "formation, and still pursues, wherever it retains "its temporal power or influence."

This is a most serious charge:—In reply to it, I beg leave to refer you to what I have already said on the miracles performed in the roman-catholic church. I must add, that the period in which the miracles, attributed to Dunstan, were performed, was the darkest period in the roman-catholic history. The nation was then suffering grievously from the effects of the Danish ravages. The demolition of monasteries; the slaughter of their unoffending inmates, who were the teachers and scholars of the

times; the consequential destruction of books, and of all public and private memorials of literature and art, "had occasioned," to use your own words, "the total loss of learning in the Anglo-Saxon "church."

But the gospel of the Anglo-Saxons still remained, and was still read. It informed them of the miracles wrought by Christ; and of his promises, that, until the end of time, his disciples should perform similar miracles, and even greater: and they knew that the promises of Christ could not fail. Besides,—as doctor Lingard justly observes, "Man is taught by human nature to attri- "bute any event to a particular cause; and when "an occurrence cannot be explained by the known "laws of the universe, it is assigned, by the illite- "rate in every age, and in every religion, to the "operation of an invisible agent. This principle "was not extirpated; it was improved by the know- "ledge of the gospel. From the doctrine of a super- "intendant Providence, the Saxon converts were "led to conclude, that God would often inter- "fere in human concerns. To Him they ascribed "every unforeseen and unnatural event; and either "trusted in His bounty for visible protection from "misfortune, or feared from His justice that ven- "geance which punishes guilt before the general "day of retribution. Men, impressed with this "notion, would rather expect the appearance of "miraculous events. On many occasions, they "would be the dupes of their own credulity; and," (particularly as they had the Divine promises, men-

tioned by us, in full view), "ascribe to the bene-
"ficence of the Deity, and the intercession of their
"patrons, those cures which might have been
"effected by nature, or the power of the imagi-
"nation." Let us add, that, in this temper of mind, it was likely that sometimes, like the North-men, gifted with second sight, they would see what they did not see; and hear what they did not hear.

Do not these observations solve the whole difficulty? Do they not account for the abundance of miraculous relations, in the time of which we are writing? Do they not render it unnecessary,—we had almost said inexcusable,—to account for them by imputing fraud, imposture or systematical deceit, as is done by you, to the persons concerned in them? "If there was a man," says a writer not unknown to you*, "who could truly be called venerable, it is "he to whom that appellation is constantly paid, "Bede, whose life was past in instructing his own "generation, and in preparing records for posterity." Yet, on the relations of the venerable Bede, does the truth of a great portion of the Anglo-Saxon miracles depend. In the present enlightened age, does not our own country abound with superstitions? Inquire of the village beadles and the village dames. Does a week pass without an advertisement in more than one of our newspapers of a child's caul? Is this surpassed by any Saxon superstition? You yourself have recorded the miraculous incidents in the life of John Wesley.

I beg leave to submit the following remark to

* Quarterly Review for the month of December 1811.

your consideration. While you so learnedly, and so eloquently, bring forward in "the Book of the "Church," so much to the supposed discredit of the Anglo-Saxon church, should you not have assigned a just proportion, to what you yourself allow, to have been eminently praiseworthy and venerable? Should you not have bestowed some pages on the edifying holiness of St. Neot; the monastic sanctity and extensive learning of Bredfirth, the monk of Ramsay; the extensive learning of Bede; and the royal virtues and piety of Alfred?

On themes like these, how much did justice call on you to dwell! But how little do you say upon them!

Permit me, before I close this letter, to notice a great, but I am sure an unintentional misrepresentation contained in your present chapter*. You eulogize the primate Theodore, for prohibiting divorce for any other cause than that which is allowed by the gospel. Here you evidently allude to the council held at Hereford in 673, at which Theodore presided†. It does not prohibit divorce; but enjoins, that "no one should forsake his wife, "unless, as the gospel teaches, for fornication; "and that, if any one should have expelled his wife, "joined to him in lawful matrimony, he should "marry no other, but remain as he was, or be "reconciled to her."

* Page 84.

† Wilk. Conc. vol. 1, p. 41.

LETTER VII.

CHARGES AGAINST THE MONKS OF WITHHOLDING KNOWLEDGE, AND OF A DISPOSITION TO IMMODERATE SEVERITY. — INVESTITURES. — ST. ANSELM.

SIR,

IN this letter I shall consider the principal charges which you bring against the roman-catholic church, in the seventh chapter of your work. What respects the claim of the popes to temporal power, I shall make the subject of a future letter.

VII.

Charges against the Monks of withholding Knowledge, and of a Disposition to immoderate Severity.

You begin this chapter by intimating, that, "if "St. Dunstan had been succeeded by similar talents "and temper, and England had remained undis- "turbed by invasions, the priesthood might have "obtained as complete an ascendancy as in antient "Egypt, or in Tibet, founded upon deceit, and "upheld by uncommunicated knowledge, and im- "moderate severity."

I must attribute these expressions to that hurry of composition, which sometimes leads even the ablest writers into inaccuracy. If, for a moment, you had looked into the stores of your own mind,—

and ampler stores few possess,—you would have seen, that, in the middle ages, pope succeeded pope, with talents and temper similar to Dunstan's, yet, that, throughout the whole of this period, the eternal city, so far from being subjected to any Egyptiac or Tibetian ascendancy of priesthood, was the most free, and the most enlightened portion of Christendom.

But, in your account of monkish literature and government, how could the words, "uncommuni-"cated knowledge and immoderate severity," have fallen from *your* pen? Were not monasteries the only schools? Was not knowledge most liberally communicated in them?

As to your charge against the monks, of "immo-"derate severity," I must observe, that the passage which I have just cited from your work, is the first in which I have found this charge, or any thing like it made or insinuated; and that, after seriously revolving all I have read on monastic transactions, I cannot bring to my recollection even a single fact which supports it. To the general mildness of their government, M. Mallet, a celebrated protestant historian†, bears strong testimony. "The monks," he says, "softened by their instructions the ferо-"cious manners of the people, and opposed their "credit to the despotism of the nobility, who knew "no other occupation than war, and grievously

* Historical Memoirs of the English, Irish and Scottish Catholics, c. xvi. s. 2.

† Histoire des Suisses ou Helvétiens, tome 1, p. 105.

"oppressed their neighbours: *on this account, the* "*government of the monks was preferred to their's.* "*The people sought them for judges; it was an* "*usual saying, that it was better to be governed* "*by a bishop's crosier, than a monarch's sceptre.*" —I wish you to consider this passage; and, what is more important, to reflect, what your own extensive reading must suggest to you upon the subject. Surely you will then think that there is no foundation for your charge. Have I not brought, in my "Historical Memoirs," ample testimony to the services rendered by the monks to education and literature?

One reflection permit me to suggest to you. No one knows better than yourself the impediments which existed, in the middle ages, to the expansion of genius, and the acquisition of knowledge. Supposing that *you* had lived in that period, with all the mental endowments which you have received from nature, is it quite certain that *you* would have possessed a better or purer religion; more literary merit, or greater consistency, than the best men or best writers of those times? That *you* would have excelled Anselm, in holiness; Bede, in agiography; the author of the Alexandreis,—(to whom we owe the celebrated line,

"Incidis in Scyllam, cupiens evitare Charybdim,")

in poetry; Thomas Aquinas, in theology; Matthew Paris, or Matthew of Westminster, in history; or Roger Bacon, in philosophy?—Respect

yourself then in those, whom you might have resembled, if you had lived in their inauspicious ages; and show that blindness to their faults, and that kindness to their virtues, to which, if you had lived in their times, you would have been entitled from ours. Without their preservation of the language and writings of Greece and Rome, and, (what is of greater consequence), without their transmission to you of the sacred writings, which contain the sacred word of God, you would not have been what you are. Which is it most fitting they should receive from you,—gratitude or sarcasms?

VII. 2.

Investitures.

In considering the unhappy contests in the middle ages, between the popes and the sovereigns, on the subject of investitures, we shall find ample ground for repelling the undistinguishing and unqualified censure, which the conduct of the former has received from modern writers.

It gives me pleasure to find you are not to be classed among these.—In the chapter under consideration, you often do justice to the pope: some things however in it call for observation.

You are aware, that, in the early ages of the church, bishops were elected at a congregation of the clergy and laity of the diocese; that one, or more, of the neighbouring bishops presided at the election; that the whole congregation joined in it; that the bishop consecrated; that, from the reign

of Constantine the Great, the body of the people began to be wholly excluded; that the bishops and clergy retained their influence; that it insensibly declined, so that the monarchs usurped to themselves the exclusive rights of nominating to vacant sees; that this was very injurious to the interests of religion, as the motives of their nomination were seldom pure; that Charlemagne, and his successors, endowed the bishopries with ample territorial possessions; and that, while they were vacant, the monarchs claimed a right to receive the profits of them for their benefit, and on this account frequently delayed to fill them up. It appears from the records of the Exchequer, that Henry I. of England, in the sixteenth year of his reign, had in his hands one archbishopric, five bishopries, and three abbeys; in the nineteenth, one archbishopric, five bishoprics, and six abbeys; and, in the thirty-first, one archbishopric, six bishoprics, and seven abbeys *. You must be sensible that this was an intolerable grievance; but it did not rest here: The monarchs often sold their right of nomination to the vacant sees; and thus, to use your own words, "simony became the characteristic sin of the age."

When the vacancy was immoderately protracted, the popes often threatened to appoint to the see, without waiting for the king's nomination; and sometimes carried their threats into execution. To prevent it, the monarchs required, that, on the death or removal of every bishop, his ring and crosier

* Lingard, vol. 2, p. 65; he cites Madox, 209—212.

should be transmitted to him. On the appointment of the bishop's successor, the monarch delivered the emblems to him. The bishops did homage and fealty; and then placed the ring and crosier in the hands of the metropolitan, and received them back from him.

In this ceremonial, three things gave offence to the popes: 1st, they contended, that the monarch's nomination to the vacant see was an usurpation of the rights of the clergy, to whom alone, both by the constitution of the church, and the length of usage, it justly belonged: 2dly, that the delivery of the ring and crosier,—the acknowledged emblems of episcopal jurisdiction,—was a spiritual ceremony, which it was a sacrilege in a layman to perform; that even, if this could be explained away, it facilitated the simoniacal traffic of benefices: and, 3dly, that ecclesiastics, on account of their sacred character, ought to be exempted from doing homage and fealty,—or, at least, from the obligation of personal service in war, which was attached to them.

Permit me to ask, if the popes were not founded in all these objections, that only excepted which sought, on account of their supposed sanctity of character, to exempt the clergy from homage and fealty? So much was this the case, that in every state in Europe the contest was settled, by allowing the greater part of the papal claims. The right of electing the bishops was appropriated and confirmed to the clergy. It was provided, that the

bishops should be invested with their temporalties, by delivering the sceptre; and that personal military service should not be required from them.

Thus we find, that, on the merits,—you must excuse a lawyer using this word,—the popes were right on most points of the case; and that their main object in asserting their claims was generally commendable. So far as they resorted to temporal means for establishing them, then they were completely wrong. So far as they resorted to spiritual means, they acted within their proper sphere. But, in the use of these means, were they always right? "Where much is done," says doctor Johnson, "something wrong will always be found."

You present us with an homely likeness of St. Anselm. You cannot call in question his piety, his zeal, his disinterestedness, the beauty of his genius, his firmness, or his learning. You acknowledge that a surprising revival of literature had been effected by him, and Lanfranc his immediate predecessor. You blame him, however, for the part which he took in the dispute on investitures. But, according to the principles universally received in his time, was he not always in the right? and even, according to the received opinions of our times, was he much in the wrong? You do not sufficiently notice, that the dispute between him and the king turned on other matters besides investitures;—on the long vacancy of sees and benefices; on the king's appropriating the profits of them to his own use;

on his exactions and simoniacal sales. On each of these heads was not Anselm justifiable? You do not give him the praise he merits, for his conduct between Henry I. and Robert. Permit me to request you to peruse doctor Gibson's celebrated preface to his *Codex Juris Ecclesiastici*; and then say, whether that prelate, and all the prelates of his high school, would not, if they had lived in the times of Anselm, have thought it their duty to act, in a great measure, like him?

LETTER VIII.

IMMUNITIES OF THE CHURCH—ST. THOMAS À BECKET.

SIR,

YOU dedicate a great part of your eighth chapter to the contest between Henry II. and the celebrated Thomas à Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, whom the church of Rome numbers among her saints. You try him by the present constitution, the present laws, and the present manners of christian states, and by the present notions of what is fit and proper, and you pronounce him guilty. But is it not by the constitutions, the laws, the customs, the manners, and the notions of his own time, that he should be tried? To pronounce a fair judgment on him, should we not transport ourselves to the middle of the twelfth century, and to the circumstances of the world at that period? If we did so, should we not find that the clerical immunities, upon which the contest *in its first stage* wholly turned, founded a part of the constitution of every christian state, and of England not less than any other? That they had been both granted and confirmed to the church by wise and great princes? That, from the time in which they date their existence, until many centuries after the æra of which we are speaking, they had been observed and respected by the good? And that they had

never been infringed by any, whose name history has handed down to us with honour? Taking all these circumstances into consideration, can we justly blame the illustrious prelate for his vigorous and resolute defence of rights, which most certainly, in his time, made a part of the law of England, and were an acknowledged bulwark of the English constitution? Had this eminent man submitted to the monarch in the contest in which they had engaged, what guard against the royal abuse of power could have been maintained? You and I have read with delight, what the most eloquent man of our times has said and written of the spoliation of the Gallican clergy, and his verified predictions of its disastrous result. Had any observer, equally profound and gifted, lived in the days of Becket, would he not have predicted a result equally disastrous, if Henry's aggressions had been crowned with success? Let us listen to Montesquieu: "I am not," says that great man, "violently in love with the privileges "of the clergy; but I wish that their jurisdiction "should once be well established. After that, the "question is not, whether it was right so to esta-"blish it, but whether it is established; whether "it makes part of the laws of the land; and whether "it is connected with them throughout? As much "as the power of the church is dangerous in a "republic, so much it is useful in a monarchy, "particularly in those which tend to despotism. "Where would Spain and Portugal be, since the

" loss of their laws, without this power,—the only " check on arbitrary sway?"

Now, all history informs us, that long before the commencement of this celebrated contest the immunities of the clergy had been established, and become part of the law of England. Does not this decide the question? Must we not conclude, on the principles of Montesquieu, that the monarch's attack upon them was altogether wrong? That Becket, in defending them, was altogether right?

You notice the observations which Becket, when he was solicited to accept the see of Canterbury, is related to have made, both to the monarch and to his confidential friends,—that " he foresaw that, if he " should be raised to the see of Canterbury, he must " either lose the favour of the king, or sacrifice to " it the service of his God. But this," you inform us, " was said to the monarch with a smile, so that, " whether intentionally or not, it conveyed a mean- " ing which invalidated the words." May I ask, from what author you took this account of Becket's smile? or the inference you draw from it? Was not Becket's expression a fair and honourable notice to the monarch, that he was not to depend on the connivance of the archbishop in the illaudable practices in which he had already too much indulged?

You also notice the change in Becket's manners, which immediately followed his consecration; and you ridicule his penitential austerities. Are you not sensible that, in every part of the globe, in

which christianity has been received, similar austerities have been practised by the wisest, the noblest, and the best of men! The examples of these men you may think of no consequence: but what do you say to the high commendations of penitential fastings, with which the most eminent lights of your own church,—your own Patricks, your own Beveridges, your own Gunnings, your own book of Common Prayer, and your own homilies, abound? They are so strongly expressed, that, if we should strike a balance between the fasts which they recommend, and those which the archbishop practised, the preponderance, if any, in favour of the archbishop, would not be very considerable. Where is the difference between fasts and other austerities?

You do not admire his voluntary resignation of the office of chancellor; but was it not an act of duty? You blame him for instituting proceedings for the recovery of the lands belonging to his see; was not this, too, an act of duty? Whose memory should the present prelacy of the established church of England most respect,—the memory of Becket, who preserved the possessions of his see; or the memory of those prelates, so eloquently praised by you in a further part of your work, who, in the reigns of Edward VI. and Elizabeth, so liberally complimented away large portions of them to their sovereign?

But the character of the archbishop is little affected by these incidental inquiries. It rests on

his conduct at the convention at Clarendon; and on the events which produced his murder. The former we may consider as the first, the latter as the last stage of the controversy between him and his royal master.

The monarch contended that the clergy should, in future, be tried for felonies in his courts of justice. To obtain a recognition of this claim, he summoned all the prelates of England to Westminster; and required them to acknowledge the right of his courts to try the clergy. They hesitated. He then asked, whether they would promise to abide by the antient law of the realm? The archbishop, speaking for himself, and for the other prelates present, replied, that "they were "willing to be bound by the antient law of the "realm, as far as the honour of God, and the "church, and the privileges of their order, per-"mitted." The king required the omission of the saving words: the archbishop insisted on the retention of them. At first, the other prelates adhered to him; but the king brought them over: and, after much solicitation, the archbishop acquiesced. The monarch, to render the assent of the prelates to his claims the more solemn, summoned the convention of the spiritual and temporal lords of his kingdom to Clarendon, near Salisbury. When they met, the archbishop expressed a wish that the saving words should be retained. He consented, however, afterwards to the omission of them; requiring, at the same time, that the cus-

toms should be defined. This was both prudent and honourable; for, while the customs should remain undefined, the dispute would invariably continue. Thus there could be no reasonable objection to the request of the prelate. It was acceded to by the king; and a specification of the customs was accordingly drawn up by a committee, appointed by the convention. It was exhibited in sixteen articles, called by the historians of the times "The "Constitutions of Clarendon."

This brings us to the point:—Did the constitutions exhibit the antient customs of the realms? If they did, the archbishop and the other prelates were bound, by their promise, to recognize and observe them. If they did not, the archbishop and the other prelates were bound to neither; nor could they acknowledge that the constitutions expressed the antient customs of the realm, or bind themselves to the observance of them, as such, without incurring the guilt, both of a solemn untruth, and of treason to the constitution.

On this point, therefore, the whole question on the conduct of the archbishop, at the convention at Clarendon, rests altogether. Does it require much investigation to arrive at a proper conclusion upon it?

By one of the articles, the custody and revenues of the temporalities of every archbishopric, bishopric, abbey, or priory of royal foundation, was declared to belong, during its vacancy, to the king: this was an absolute innovation.

By another, it was provided, that civil and criminal

suits, though each or either party to them were a clergyman, should commence in the royal courts; that the justices should decide, whether they ought to be determined there, or in the ecclesiastical courts; that, in the latter case, a civil officer should attend the trial, and report of the proceedings; and that, if the person accused should be convicted, he should forfeit the privileges of his character, and receive judgment accordingly. All this was, perhaps, very proper; but all was contrary to the existing law.

Another article declared, that tenants in chief should not be excommunicated without the leave of the king; or, in his absence, of his justiciary. This was in opposition to the law of Christ; and to the law of every christian country. It is even contrary to the present law of England, and to the practice of its courts.

Another article forbade appeals to Rome. At this period of our history appeals were allowed in England, and in every other part of the christian world. It is observable, that the monarch himself, during the contest, appealed more than once to the roman see.

Such being the state of the contest, in this stage of it, permit me to say, that it is, with something more than surprise, that I read in your work the following lines: "If these constitutions were in "direct opposition to the system of Hildebrand "and his successors, and at once removed all those "encroachments which the hierarchy had made in

" this kingdom during Stephen's contested reign, " it should be remembered that *they were not new* " *edicts, enacted in a spirit of hostility to the* " *church, but a declaration and recognition of the* " *existing law.*"

By this, I understand you to affirm, that, as the law of England *existed in the reign of Henry II.* it allowed the monarch to retain the profits of vacant sees for his own benefit; it allowed the clergy to be tried for petit treason, and less crimes, in temporal courts; it exempted tenants in chief from being excommunicated; and it inhibited appeals to Rome. Can any of these positions be supported?—In my humble opinion they cannot.

Doctor Lingard* thinks with me; and so does our common friend, Mr. Sharon Turner. " In " justice to Becket," says that learned and discriminating writer, " it must be admitted that these " famous articles completely changed the legal and " civil state of the clergy; and were an actual " subversion, as far as they went, of the papal " policy, so boldly introduced by Gregory VII†;" —and then completely received into the civil and ecclesiastical polity and jurisdiction of every European state.

We now reach the *second stage* of this important controversy. A detail of the incidents is foreign to the subject of this letter. It is sufficient

* History of England, vol. 2, p. 64, 65, 66.

† Ibid. vol. 1, p. 213.

to mention succinctly, that, after many fruitless endeavours, a reconciliation between the archbishop and the sovereign took place at Freitville, in Normandy; that the archbishop returned to England; that, upon a complaint by him against the prelates, who had assisted at the coronation of prince Henry, the celebration of which ceremony belonged of right to the see of Canterbury, the pope excommunicated the bishops of London, Rochester, and Salisbury; conferring, at the same time, a power in the archbishop to absolve them; that, on his refusal, they attended in person on the king, who was then in Normandy, to make their complaints against the archbishop; that, irritated by their representations, the king exclaimed, "Of the cowards who "eat my bread, is there not one who will free "me from this turbulent priest?" That four knights, who heard this exclamation, bound themselves by oath to avenge the king; that they sailed for England, and proceeded to Canterbury, entered the cathedral, and, advancing to the archbishop, required him instantly to absolve the bishops; that he refused to absolve them till they made satisfaction; that, on his refusal, the four knights murdered him; that, as soon as the king was informed of it, he solemnly denied all participation in the guilt; but admitted the unguarded exclamation upon which the knights proceeded to the perpetration of the crime; and, on this account, submitted to a public and humiliating penance; and was absolved by the pope. Previously to it, he

solemnly abrogated all the unlawful customs, which had been introduced into his states, and forbade their being observed in future.

Thus Becket perished for a faithful adherence to ecclesiastical duty. The pope himself had excommunicated the three prelates. Now, the canons of the church require, that, when excommunication has been issued, it shall not be taken off until the party proves his innocence, or makes his submission: even now this is English law. As the case then stood, the fact, for which the prelates had been excommunicated, was undeniable, and the prelates had made no submission. Becket, therefore, had no authority to remove the excommunication; he would have incurred irregularity by doing it, and thus have, himself, become liable to the censures of the church: hence, he refused, and braved, by his refusal, a cruel death. His conduct was admired and applauded by the whole world. You must be aware, that the liberties, confirmed to the church by *Magna Charta*, included equally those rights for which Becket contended at Clarendon, and those for which he was murdered at Canterbury.

Some candid protestants have done justice to his memory: Collier's account of the controversy between him and his sovereign * deserves a serious perusal.

With one further observation I must trouble you. *No roman-catholic imagines, at this time, that the ecclesiastics were entitled, by divine right,*

* Ecclesiastical History, vol. 2, p. 343—347.

to the immunity, for which Becket contended, in the first stage of the controversy. All agree, that the only real title to it is by grant from the state, or by immemorial usage, in which a grant is always pre-supposed. Now, such a grant *might have been made* on grounds, both of wisdom and sound policy. The rules of the gospel are equally calculated to produce obedience to the laws, as to form individuals to virtue and holiness; it is, therefore, the duty of the state to promote whatever has a tendency to make the gospel respected. Experience shows, that respect for the gospel exists seldom, without respect for its ministers; there *might*, therefore, be good sense to keep their occasional scandals from the public eye, and, for this purpose, to confine the investigation of them to the ecclesiastical tribunals of the realm: some individuals might, by this arrangement, escape punishment; but the legislature *might* have been wise in considering, that although this would be mischievous, exposure would be a greater mischief.

LETTER IX.

I. CESSION BY KING JOHN OF THE SOVEREIGNTY OF ENGLAND TO POPE INNOCENT III.—II. TEMPORAL POWER OF THE POPE.

SIR,

I HAVE now reached your ninth chapter; it turns chiefly on the pope's exercise of temporal power. In the present state of the controversy between the protestants and roman-catholics of this realm, it is the most important chapter of your work. I shall premise my discussion of it, by some observations on your account of the transactions between the pope and king John.

IX. 1.

Cession by King John of the Sovereignty of England to Pope Innocent III.

IT is usually supposed, that John absolutely divested himself of the sovereignty of the kingdom, and transferred it to Innocent. This was not the fact: the monarch retained his sovereignty, but agreed, that he and his successors should hold it from the pope and his successors in fee simple, by homage and fealty, and by the annual render of 10,000 marks. The consequence was, that, in respect to his subjects, and their rights, John continued in the possession of the same regalities, and subject to the same obligations, as before; for, in all cases of

lord, vassal, and sub-vassal, the lord had no direct right over the sub-vassal, or any direct estate or interest in his territory. The lord's right and interest consisted in this, that if the vassal neglected to perform the services, or pay the rent incident to his tenure, the territory was subject to the lord's remedy for enforcing them, and liable, in some instances, to be forfeited. When this happened, the vassalage was extinguished; and the sub-vassal became, from that time, chief or immediate tenant to the lord. It is the same, at the present time, with respect to a manor, which the lord of it holds of the lord of another manor. If the intermediate lord neglects to pay his rent, or to perform his service, the superior lord may enforce them by distress, and, in some cases, by seizing the intermediate manor for forfeiture. When the forfeiture takes place, the lordship of the intermediate manor ceases, and the tenants of it become actual or immediate tenants of the superior lord. It may be added, that, at the time to which the subject of these letters has led us, there scarcely was, in Christendom, a sovereign who was not possessed of territories, for which he was a vassal, either to some other sovereign, or to the subject of another sovereign.

Still, if the transaction had rested here, both the monarch and the pontiff would have been inexcusable, as the former had no right to confer, or the latter to receive, the ultimate feudal superiority created by the arrangement.

But it may be observed, in justification both of

the monarch and the pontiff, that the prelates, barons, and knights of the realm, were parties to the transaction, and concurred in it. You yourself inform us, that all parties had alternately appealed to the pope. The ignominious ceremony was performed in their presence, and without even a murmur of disapprobation; it may be added, that it took place under a national apprehension of a French invasion; and it is not a little remarkable, that the barons, soon afterwards, transferred their allegiance to Lewis, the son of the French monarch, then at the head of the invading army. Considering all these circumstances, you will probably think, with me, that the transaction has not been fairly represented by the generality of our historians; that the pontiff shares the blame with the king, and his spiritual and temporal lords; and that he was less blameable than either.

IX. 2.

Temporal Power of the Pope.

FROM an humble fisherman, the pope successively became owner of houses and lands, acquired the power of magistracy in Rome, and large territorial possessions in Italy, Dalmatia, Sicily, Sardinia, France and Africa, and ultimately obtained the rank and consequence of a great temporal prince.

Here the pope did not stop; but claimed, by divine gift, a right to exercise supreme temporal

power over all christian sovereigns, when a great good of religion required it. This claim was unfounded; both the gospel and tradition declared against it, and it produced great evil.

But let us be just:

1. In theory, the utility of such a power may be imagined. "The interest of human kind," says Voltaire, "requires a curb to withhold sove-"reigns, and to protect the lives of their subjects. "By a general convention, this curb might have "been placed in the hands of the popes. These "supreme pontiffs,—by interfering in temporal "quarrels, for no purpose but appeasing them; by "representing to sovereigns and subjects their "respective duties; by reproving their crimes, and "reserving excommunications for great enormities, "—might have been regarded as gods upon earth. "But men are reduced to have no other defence "than the laws and manners of their country; "laws often despised, and manners often corrupt."

In the middle ages there was often no such available law; some curb was, therefore, necessary, and it could not be placed in better hands than in those of the pope.

2. "*By universal convention,*" says Voltaire *, "it might have been placed in his hands." No such universal convention was entered into at any specific time; but, from the repeated acknowledgment of the sovereigns of almost every christian

* Essai sur l'Hist. Gen. tom. 2, c. 49.

state, may it not be plausibly contended that such a convention was tacitly established? "Unhap-"pily," says Voltaire*, "almost all the sovereigns, "by an inconceivable blindness, laboured to give "it credit in public opinion, as a weapon which "depended, for its power, on public opinion only. "When it was levelled at one of their rivals, or "their enemies, they not only approved but soli-"cited it; and by their undertaking to execute a "sentence, which deprived a sovereign of his state, "they subjected their own to the usurped juris-"diction." In confirmation of this observation of Voltaire, we may mention, that when the pope excommunicated Phillip Augustus of France, for marrying a woman during the life of his first wife, he charged the pope with insolence, and an abuse of power; but when the pope conferred the kingdom of England upon Phillip, and his heirs, he never observed to any one, that the pope had no right to dispose of kingdoms. At the league of Cambray, the kings of France and Spain recognized the pope's power of excommunication; and stipulated, that he should subject Venice to an interdict, if she did not comply with their demands within a given time. It is not a little remarkable, that, so lately as the sixteenth century, Henry VII. than whom no monarch was more jealous of his prerogative, or better acquainted with it, applied to pope Innocent for a confirmation of his

* Lettres sur l'Histoire, tom. 2, lett. 2. 4.

title to the crown. Lord Bacon cites the bull by which it was granted.

I repeat, that the claim was fantastic. But who were most blameable,—the popes, who made the claim, or the sovereigns, who acknowledged it? The latter were silly; worldly wisdom could not blame the former.

3. It must be admitted, that the popes, by insisting upon their claims, sometimes produced good. The action and re-action of the pope's aggression, and the monarch's resistance, gave to each the *locus penitentiæ*, the hour of reflection, and brought both to moderate councils: this proved, in the result, advantageous, both to the religious and the civil interests of the people.

4. It must also be admitted, that, in these contests, the clergy generally supported the monarch; and that, on other occasions, they resisted the undue exertion of papal prerogative.

5. In most respects, the popes appear to advantage, both in their sacerdotal and their regal capacities. That a few, in the long list were stained by vice, is not denied; or that others exhibited the workings of those passions, which too often accompany the possession of power. But can it be said, that, even in the times of the greatest darkness, the roman pontiffs were not generally distinguished by superior virtue and superior acquirements? Collectively taken, let them be compared with their contemporary princes in every age, and, most assuredly, they will not suffer in the comparison.

Voltaire observes, that, in the dark ages, there was less of barbarism and ignorance, in the dominions of the popes, than in any other European state. Much, unquestionably, was done by them, in every portion of Christendom, to dispel ignorance, to spread the faith and morality of the gospel, to protect the lower ranks against their oppressors, to preserve peace among princes, and to alleviate the general calamity of the times. Their exertions, during the middle ages, to compel the monarchs of Europe to respect the sanctity of marriage, have not been sufficiently observed. Had it not been for these, royal incontinence, even of the worst kind, would probably have become common, and might perhaps have been generally imitated.

Persecuted and plundered in England, France, Spain, Germany, and every other European state, the Jews were uniformly protected by the popes. Great exertions were made by them for the redemption of captives, and the amelioration of the condition of the slaves: in 1167, pope Alexander III. solemnly declared in council, that all christians ought to be exempt from slavery. The popes were always in favour with the lower classes: a certain sign of the protection which that portion of the community received from them. Mr. Sharon Turner observes*, "that no tyranny," (I wish he had used another word), "was ever established, that "was more unequivocally the creature of popular "will; nor longer maintained by popular support:"

* History of England, vol. 2, p. 332. 361.

And that, "in no point, did personal interest and "public welfare more unite, than in the encourage-"ment of monasteries." Nothing contributed more to elevate the third estate into notice, or give it importance, than the assistance which the Italian republics, in their contests with the emperors, received from the popes. Their exertions for the conversion of infidels were unremitted. Few nations can read the history of the introduction of christianity among their ancestors, without being sensible of their obligations to the tiara.

Writing to a gentleman of your erudition, I have less hesitation in expressing myself in the manner I have done, than I should have otherwise. No one knows better than yourself, that, whatever advocates for the pope's temporal power may have existed formerly, no advocate for it can be found now. It is rejected in the Gallican declaration of 1682, which was signed by every ecclesiastic, secular or religious, in France. All the English, Irish and Scottish catholics have disclaimed it upon oath. Perhaps it never was quite so hideous as it has been represented; but,

"Peace to the strepent horn."

SHENSTONE.

LETTER X.

VIEW OF THE ROMAN-CATHOLIC SYSTEM.

SIR,

THE title which you give to the chapter of your work, which I have now to consider, is, "View of "the *Papal* System :" The words *popery, papal* and *papist* being particularly offensive to roman-catholics, I have altered it, by substituting the word "roman-catholic" for the word "papal." In the oath, which the legislature has prescribed to us, we are styled "roman-catholics." On this account it has always been a rule with me, to denote, in my publications, the religious denomination of christians to which I belong, by the appellation of "roman-catholics."

Under the numerous heads of,—I. Devotion to the Virgin Mary, the saints and angels, and respect to the cross, and the relics of the saints :—II. Purgatory, and prayers for the dead :—III. Auricular confession and indulgences :—IV. St. Augustine and Pelagius :—V. Transubstantiation :—And VI. The authority of the pope :—I shall take, successively into consideration, the principal subjects upon which you criminate the roman-catholics in your tenth chapter. A controversial discussion of any of these topics would be misplaced in this publication. All that I shall attempt will be, to state, in the shortest manner possible, the doctrine of the roman-catholic church on these different

heads, accompanying them with short remarks. I shall close my letter with some general observations.

X. 1.

Devotion to the Virgin Mary, the Saints,—respect to the Cross, and to the Relics of the Saints.

1. "*The saints*, reigning with Christ, offer up "their prayers to God for man. It is a good and "useful supplication to invoke them; and to have "recourse to their prayers, help and assistance to "obtain favours from God, through his Son Jesus "Christ our Lord, above, who is our Redeemer "and Saviour." This is the decree of the council of Trent*.—The catechism, published in pursuance of its decrees, teaches, that "God and the saints "are not to be prayed to in the same manner; for "we pray to God that He himself would give us "good things, and deliver us from evil things: "but we beg of the saints, because they are pleas-"ing to God, that they would be our advocates, "and obtain from God what we stand in need "of†." Consult Bossuet's *Exposition of Faith*, under this article; read *the catechisms*, which we successively put into the hands of children, youth, and persons grown up: examine *all our writers*, either profound or popular, you will meet with the same doctrine. Open our *prayer books*, you will

* Sess. xxv. de Invocatione Sanctorum.
† Part iv. Quis Orandus.

find, that, when we address God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, or the Holy Trinity, we say to them, "*Have mercy on us*;" and that, when we address the blessed Virgin, the saints, or the angels,—the descent is infinite,—and we say to them, "*Pray for us.*"

What do we think of those, who give to the Virgin Mary, to the saints, or to the angels, the honour due to God? Open *Mr. Gother's* "*Papist Misrepresented,*" abridged by doctor Challoner, —the editions of which abridgment are countless,— you will find in them these strong expressions: "Cursed is he that believes the saints in heaven "to be his redeemers; that prays to them as "such; or that gives God's honour to them, or to "any creature whatsoever. Amen."—"Cursed is "every goddess-worshipper, that believes the blessed "Virgin Mary to be any more than a creature; "that worships her, or puts his trust in her, more "than in God; that believes she is above her Son, "or that she can, in any thing, command Him. "Amen."

Does not the Greek church; do not all the other churches, which separated from the church of Rome, before the Reformation, invoke the Virgin Mary, the other saints, and the angels? Does not Martin Luther* exclaim, "Who can deny that God "works great miracles at the tombs of the saints? "I therefore, with the whole catholic church, hold,

* In his letters to Spalatinus, and his treatise de Purgatione quorundem, and in his Preparatio ad Mortem.

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to that the saints are to be honoured and invoked "by us. Let no one omit to call upon the blessed "Virgin, the angels and saints, that they may inter-"cede for them at the hour of death." Do not several distinguished divines of your church maintain the same doctrine? Is it not approved by Leibniz*? Finally, does not doctor Thorndike† warn his brethren "not to lead people by the nose "to believe, that they can prove papists to be "idolators, when they cannot."

Then permit me to ask, whether the authorities which I have cited, do not give a true and clear exposition of the doctrine of the catholic church, upon this important subject?—Whether the doctrine be idolatrous or superstitious?—Whether the practice of it do not fill the mind with soothing reflections?—With thoughts that increase charity and animate piety? You cannot find a virtuous catholic, who will not own to you, that he considers the hours, thus spent by him, to be among the most pleasing of his life.

12. Pursuing the same method, in respect *to the cross, and relics of the saints*, I shall transcribe the decree of the council of Trent upon them: "Although the images of Christ, the Virgin "Mother of God, and the other saints, are to be "kept and retained, particularly in churches, and "due honour and veneration paid to them, yet we

* Exposition de la Système de Leibniz sur la Religion. Paris, 8vo. 1819, p. 161.

† Just Weights and Measures, p. 10.

"are not to believe, that there is any divinity or "power in them, for which we respect them, or "that any thing is to be asked from them, or that "trust is to be placed in them, as the heathens "of old trusted in their idols." Consult all the authors mentioned in the former part of this letter, you will find the same language. Open our *catechisms*, you will find it asked, "May we pray to "relics or images?" You will find it answered, "No, by no means, for they have no life or sense "to hear or help us." Then, open *Gother's* "*Papist Misrepresented*," you will read, "Cursed "is he that commits idolatry, that prays to images "or relics, or worships them for God."

Such is the doctrine of the catholic church, on those subjects.

3. We *venerate the cross*, as a memorial of the passion and death of the Author of our salvation. We *venerate the images, paintings, and relics*, of the saints, as memorials, that bring their virtues and rewards to our minds and hearts. We also venerate their relics, as portions of their holy bodies, which will be glorified through all eternity.

In all this, can you find out any thing reprehensible?

X. 2.

Purgatory and Prayers for the Dead.

As I am not writing a work of controversy, I shall say little on the articles in your present chapter which remain to be discussed.

As to the *existence of purgatory*, for the belief of which the roman-catholics have been so often and so harshly reviled,—Do not all, who call themselves "'rational protestants,'" think with us, that (to use the language of doctor Johnson), "the "generality of mankind are neither so obstinately "wicked, as to deserve everlasting punishment; nor "so good, as to merit being admitted into the "society of the blessed spirits; and that God is, "therefore, generously pleased to allow a middle "state, where they may be purified by a certain "degree of suffering." With those who profess this doctrine, does not your own opinion accord?

As to prayers for the dead. The council of Trent* has decreed, "that there is a purgatory, "and that the souls detained in it are helped by "the suffrages of the faithful."

The nature and extent of these suffrages are thus explained by St. Augustine†: "When the "sacrifice of the altar, or alms, are offered for the "dead, then, in regard to those whose lives were "very good, such sacrifices may be deemed acts of "thanksgiving. In regard to the imperfect, they "may be deemed acts of propitiation; though "they bring no aid to the very bad, they may "give some comfort to the living."

Tradition, in favour of the catholic doctrine of purgatory, is so strong, that Calvin confesses explicitly, that "during 1,300 years before his

* Sess. xxv. Decretum de Purgatione, p. 286.

† Enchird, c. xc. tom. 2, p. 83.

" time, (1,600 before ours), it had been the practice " to pray for the dead, in the hope of procuring " them relief." You yourself will scarcely venture to assert, that there is any thing substantially wrong in this devotion, when you recollect, that archbishop Cranmer said a solemn mass for the soul of Henry II. of France; that bishop Ridley preached, and that eight other prelates assisted at it in their copes.

X. 3.

Auricular Confession—Indulgences.

In respect to the auricular confession, I hope you will be convinced, that it does not deserve a bitter word, when you have perused the following testimonies in its favour.

" The Lutheran," says doctor Milner, in his End of Controversy, " who are the elder branch " of the reformation, in their confession of faith, " and apology for that confession, expressly teach, " that absolution is no less a sacrament than bap- " tism and the Lord's Supper; that particular abso- " lution is to be retained in confession; that, to " reject it, is the error of the Novatian heretics; and " that, by the power of the keys, (Matth. xvi. 19.), " sins are remitted, not only in the sight of the " church, but also in the sight of God *. Luther " himself, in his catechism, required that the peni-

* Confess. August. art. XI. XII. XIII. Apol.

"tent, in confession, should expressly declare, that "he believes the forgiveness of the priest to be the "forgiveness of God *. What can bishop Porteus, "and other modern protestants, say to all this, "except that Luther and his disciples were in- "fected with popery? Let us then proceed to "inquire into the doctrine of the most distin- "guished heads. In the order of the communion, "composed by Cranmer, and published by Ed- "ward VI. the parson, vicar, or curate, is to proclaim "this, among other things, 'If there be any of "you, whose conscience is troubled and grieved at "any thing, lacking comfort or counsel, let him "come to me, or to some other learned priest, and "confess and open his sin and grief secretly, &c. "that of us, as a minister of God, and of the "church, he may receive comfort and absolution †.' "Conformably with this admonition, it is ordained "in the common Prayer Book, 'that when the "minister visits any sick person, the latter should "be moved to make a special confession of his "sins, if he feels his conscience troubled with any "weighty matter; after which confession, the "priest should absolve him, if he humbly and "heartily desire it, after this sort: *Our Lord* "*Jesus Christ, who hath left power to his church* "*to absolve all sinners, who truly repent and* "*believe in him, of his great mercy, forgive thee*

* In Catech. Parv. See also Luther's Table Talk, c. xviii. on Auricular Confession.

† Bishop Sparrow's Collect. p. 10.

'*thine offences*; *and by his authority, committed* '*to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the* '*name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the* '*Holy Ghost. Amen* *.' I may add, that soon after James I. became, at the same time, the 'member and the head of the English church, he 'desired his prelates to inform him, in the confer-'ence at Hampton Court, what authority this 'church claimed in the article of absolution from 'sin. When archbishop Whitgift began to en-'tertain him with an account of the general 'confession and absolution, in the communion 'service, with which the king not being satisfied, 'Bancroft, at that time bishop of London, fell on 'his knees, and said, 'It becomes us to deal 'plainly with your majesty: There is also in the 'book a more particular and personal absolution 'in the Visitation of the Sick. Not only the con-'fession of Augusta, (Augsburg), Bohemia and 'Saxony, retain and allow it, but also Mr. Calvin 'doth approve both such a general and such a 'private confession and absolution.' To this the '" king answered, 'I exceedingly well approve of '" it, being an apostolical and godly ordinance, '" given, in the name of Christ, to one that desireth '" it, upon the clearing of his conscience †.'"

* Order of the Visitation of the Sick. *N. B.* To encourage the secret confession of sins, the church of England has made a canon, requiring her ministers not to reveal the same. See Canones Eccles. A. D. 1693, n. 113.

† Fuller's Ch. Hist. B. x. p. 9. See the defence of Bancroft's successor in the see of Canterbury, doctor Laud, who

I beg leave to add the words of the "immortal "Chillingworth;" for by this epithet he is frequently distinguished by your writers.

"Can any man be so unreasonable as to imagine "that, when our Saviour in so solemn a manner, "having first breathed upon his disciples, thereby "conveying and insinuating the Holy Ghost into "their hearts,—renewed unto them, or rather con-"firmed that glorious commission, &c. whereby he "delegated to them an authority of binding and "loosing sins upon earth, &c.—can any one think, "I say, so unworthily of our Saviour, as to esteem "these words of his for no better than compliment? "Therefore, in obedience to his gracious will, and as "I am warranted and enjoined by my holy mother, "the church of England, I beseech you, that, by "your practice and use, you will not suffer that "commission, which Christ hath given to his minis-"ters, to be a vain form of words, without any sense "under them. When you find yourselves charged "and oppressed, &c. have recourse to your spiritual "physician, and freely disclose the nature and ma-"lignancy of your disease, &c. *And come not to "him only with such mind as you would go to a "learned man; as one that can speak comfort-"able things to you; but as to one that hath*

endeavoured to enforce auricular confession, in Heylin's Life of Laud, part 2, p. 415. It appears, from this writer, that Laud was confessor to the duke of Buckingham; and, from Burnet, that bishop Morley was confessor to the duchess of York, when a protestant. Hist. of his own Times.

"*authority delegated to him from God himself,*
"*to absolve and acquit you of your sins**."

To these testimonies,—which should have so much weight with you,—I shall only add the same observation as I have just made on our doctrine of prayers for the dead; that in the Greek church, and in the numerous oriental churches of the Nestorians, Eutychians, and Monothelites, who separated from the church of Rome in an early age of christianity, auricular confession is retained and practised. Does not this circumstance incontrovertibly prove its early admission into the church? In ecclesiastical doctrine and discipline is not such early antiquity always respectable?

In respect to *indulgences*.—I flatter myself that, when you see the doctrine of the roman-catholics upon them, divested of the misrepresentations which have too often been made of it, and are yet too often repeated, you will find nothing in it contrary to common sense, or prejudicial to the interests of religion or morality.

The roman-catholic church teaches, that God frequently remits the essential guilt of sin and the eternal punishment incurred by it, but leaves a temporal punishment to be incurred by the sinner; that this temporal punishment may consist either of evil in this life, or of temporal suffering in the next,—which temporal suffering in the next life we call purgatory; that the temporal punishment may consist of both these inflictions, and that the

* Serm. vii. Relig. of Prot. pp. 408, 409.

church has received power from God to remit them either wholly or partially. This remission is called an Indulgence. When the temporal punishment is wholly remitted, the indulgence is said to be plenary; when the remission is partial, the indulgence is proportionably limited. Thus, an indulgence of a certain number of days, or of months, or years, is a remission, during that period of time, of the temporal punishment due to the sinner.

To every indulgence conditions are annexed: the first, is sincere repentance. Now, in the understanding of the catholic church, sincere repentance always includes a sincere sorrow for having offended God; and, when a neighbour has been injured, full reparation for the injury, when the circumstances of the penitent allow it; or, when this is not the case, the fullest reparation in his power, with a firm resolution to complete it, if his circumstances should afterwards enable him so to do. This restitution equally extends to injuries in character, as to personal or pecuniary injuries. It is never dispensed with. Will the making of it reduce the penitent to indigence? Will it occasion the loss of his own character? Still the priest insists upon its being made. Such is the doctrine, such the practice of the roman-catholic church respecting indulgences.

I wish you would peruse the sermons of Bourdaloue "Sur la Restitution," and "Sur Le "Jubilé.—After you have perused them, I should

wish to ask you whether, if you should find yourself injured in fortune or character, and learn that the person who had injured you was a roman-catholic, you would feel you had a *less* chance of restitution on account of the catholic doctrine of confession and of indulgences?

You mention the abuses of indulgences. You say indulgences have been too easily granted; and that they have been often sold. It is too true: but what has not been abused? There is not in the universe a territory in which, in every secular, and every ecclesiastical department, some abuse does not exist. Are we, on that account, to conclude with the Lollards, and other Manichean radicals, that all government is evil?

You have seen the "*Taxa Cancellarii Romani*;" and you conclude that the sums of money, stated in that document to be paid for absolutions, are the purchase of them at those prices. The real state of the case is as follows:—There are some sins so enormous, that, in order to raise the greater horror of them, the absolution from them is reserved to the holy see. In these cases the priest, to whom the penitent reveals them in confession, states them, without any mention of person, time or place, to the roman see; and the roman see, when it thinks the circumstance of the case renders it proper, grants a faculty to the priest to absolve the penitent from them. All this is attended with expense. An office or tribunal is kept up for the purpose, and, to defray the expenses attending these ap-

plications, a fee is required for the *document* in which the power of absolution is granted. * Thus these sums of money are only fees of office: they are small: the lips of a Roman datary would water at the sight of a bill of an English proctor. When the absolute poverty of the party is stated, no fee is required.

Does the church of England grant no indulgence or absolution for money? Consult your own canons*. In a remonstrance of grievances presented by a committee of the Irish parliament to Charles I. complaint is made that "several bishops "received great sums of money for commutations "of penance, which they had converted to their "own use†." Has not doctor Glover‡ abundantly shown that commutations of penance, for money are, at this time, practised in your church? Do I, then, criminate the church of England upon this account? I only say, that her ministers should be circumspect, in criminating the church of Rome for similar commutations.

* Articuli pro Claro, A. D. 1584, Sparrow, 195. Received by the Synod of London in 1597, Sparrow, 248—252. Canon 14, Sparrow, 368.

† Cited by doctor Curry, in his Historical Memoirs of Ireland, vol. 1, p. 109.

‡ In his Reply to the Bishop of Peterborough.

X. 4.

St. Augustine and Pelagius.

"BRITAIN," you inform us, "has the credit or "discredit, whichever it may be deemed, of having "given birth to Pelagius, the most remarkable "man of whom Wales can boast, and the most "reasonable of all those men, whom the antient "church has branded with the note of heresy." What proofs of superior reason were exhibited by Pelagius, I have yet to learn. By your account, he denied original sin; and this, you justly observe, "is a perilous error." But, by your account also, "he vindicated the goodness of God, by asserting "the free-will of man; and he judged more *sanely* "than his triumphant antagonist St. Augustine, "who, retaining too much of the philosophy which "he had learned in the Manichean school, in-"fected with it the whole church during many "centuries, and afterwards divided both the catho-"lic and protestant world." Is this a fair statement of the comparative merit of Pelagius and St. Augustine? Does it give an accurate view of the controversy between them? You add, that, "of "all those ambitious spirits, who have adulterated "the true doctrine of revelation with their own "opinions, Augustine, perhaps, is the one who has "produced the widest and most injurious effects."

Many of the most eminent lights of your church have entertained a very different opinion of this

great man; you will find their testimonies collected in Mr. Brerely's "Religion of St. Augustine," printed in 1620. Luther* affirms, that, "since "the apostles' time, the church had never a better "doctor than St. Augustine;" and that, "after "the sacred scriptures, there is no doctor in the "church, who is to be compared with him." If you even cursorily run over the parts of doctor Lardner's learned work, which relate to the Manichees, you will see that the doctor repeatedly mentions St. Augustine in terms of the highest praise; and, as Lardner had attentively read and considered all St. Augustine's works, his testimony is certainly of the greatest importance. Permit me to recommend his "Confessions" to your perusal; you will be delighted with them. If he had written no other work, this would give him a high rank among the most sublime, elegant and pious writers.

As to your preference of Pelagius, I need not mention to a gentleman of your learning, that disputes on free-will have agitated the world, both before and after the introduction of christianity. The difficulty has always been to discover some system, which reconciles the freedom of will with the influence of motive upon it; and which makes the good works of men meritorious in the eyes of the Almighty, while yet they remain his absolute gift. Pelagius maintained, that, both in the choice and execution of good, man acts independently of divine grace. In opposition to him, St. Augustine

* Luth. Op. ed. Witten, tom. 7; Loc. Comm. class 4, p. 45.

maintained, that grace prevents and aids our will; but does not destroy it. When he was pressed to explain, how God could be the sole author of good, unless his grace necessitated man to the choice or execution of it, he acknowledged the extreme difficulty of the question: he frequently gives no other answer, than exclaiming with St. Paul*; "Oh! the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom "and the knowledge of God! His judgments, how "unsearchable! His ways, how past belief!" He felt that the subject was beyond his reason; the time he knew would come, when "the Almighty "would be judged and overcome;"—that is, when all the dispositions of his providence would be unfolded; and the justice, the wisdom, and the holiness of his councils, would be seen and acknowledged.

Such is the system of St. Augustine on this difficult and abstruse subject:—I leave you now to decide between him and his adversary.

I am the more surprised at the harshness of your language, in respect to St. Augustine, as that great man was harsh to no one: he was mild and humble, even to those, whom he thought most to deserve blame. One passage in his writings is, upon this account, so exquisitely beautiful, that I cannot help transcribing it, particularly as I know that you, too, will peruse it with pleasure:—"Let those be "severe upon persons in error, who know not with

* Rom. xi. 33.

"what labour truth is discovered, and error "avoided. Let those be severe who know not how "harshly the diseases of the mind are cured, and "the eye of the understanding prepared to see "the light. Let those be severe who were never "entangled in error. As for me, I cannot be "severe; I know the patience and long forbear-"ance I myself have wanted*."

X. 5.

Transubstantiation.

You will expect to find something in this letter upon the important question of transubstantiation.

You inform us, that, "of all the corruptions of "christianity, there was none which the popes so "long hesitated to sanction as transubstantiation." You mention "the flagrant absurdity of this doc-"trine;" and you say, that "pope Gregory VII. "inclined to the opinion of Berenger, who opposed "it." But there is not one of these assertions for which you cite any authority: *I deny them all*; and for the authorities, upon which I ground my denial, I refer you to "Doctor Milner's Letter on "Transubstantiation," among those addressed by him to the late doctor Sturges; to his letters on the same subject in his "End of Controversy," and to his "Powerful vindication of it."—"I do, in "my heart," the late dean Milner of Carlisle used

* 1 Ep. ad Fund.

to say, "love a strong argument:" if you have the same liking, I recommend you to peruse the three works I have just mentioned: many a strong argument on the subject in question you will find in every one of them. If you will peruse the account of Berenger, in the *Histoire Litéraire de la France*, you will find your total misapprehension of the transactions between that celebrated man and pope Gregory VII. You will find that, as soon as Berenger's doctrine became known, it received that blow, which tradition always gives to religious novelty, —the universal reprobation of it by the pastors of the church of Christ. You will also find, that before it was condemned by Gregory VII, it had been successively condemned by pope Leo IX, Victor II, Nicholas II, and Alexander II, and proscribed by councils held at Rome, at Paris, at Vercelli, in 1050; at Florence, in 1054; at Rome, in 1058; 1076, 1078, and 1079; and finally, that after many subterfuges, it was retracted by its author: that he lived ten years after his retractation, and never swerved from it. It is possible that, after perusing these lines, and consulting the authorities to which they refer, you should remain an unbeliever in the catholic doctrine of transubstantiation; but I shall be surprised if you should continue to think, that, when Gregory VII. ascended the pontifical throne, it was a novelty; or that it is decent to treat it, or the believers of it, with contumely.

I shall resume the subject in a subsequent letter: I shall there consider the statute of the 30th of

Chas. II. which renders it necessary for peers, before they take their seats in parliament, to take an oath against transubstantiation; and thus, while it admits Jews, Mahometans, Deists and Atheists into parliament, excludes roman-catholic peers from their hereditary seats in that august assembly.

X. 6.

1.—*The Authority of the Pope.*

TOWARDS the end of your present chapter, you cite from some roman-catholic writers, and roman-catholic documents, several expressions respecting the rank and power of the pope, and represent them equally astonishing and disgusting by their general folly or impiety. But you do not, in a single instance, mention the work or the document from which your citations are made. Supposing them all to be truly represented, still they do not affect the catholic cause; as they are not the language of the catholic church, but expressions of individuals, for whom, whatever may be their rank or character, the roman-catholic church is not answerable.

A chain of roman-catholic writers on papal power might be supposed: On the first link we might place the roman-catholic writers, who have immoderately exalted the prerogative of the pope; on the last we might place those, who have unduly depressed it; and the centre link might be con-

sidered to represent the canon of the 10th session of the council of Florence, which defined, that "a full power was delegated to the bishop of Rome, "in the person of St. Peter, to feed, regulate, and "govern the universal church, as expressed in the "general councils and holy canons." THIS IS THE DOCTRINE OF THE ROMAN-CATHOLIC CHURCH ON THE AUTHORITY OF THE POPE, and beyond it no roman-catholic is required to believe. Some opinions, represented by the intermediate links on each side of the central link, are allowed. Those, on one side, may be supposed to represent Orsi, and the author of the learned treatise, intitled "*Quis* "*est Petrus?*" who explain the doctrine, expressed in the council of Florence, in a manner very favourable to the papal prerogative; while the intermediate links, on the other side, represent Bossuet, la Marca, and other writers, who construe the canon in a more limited sense. The former have received the appellation of Transalpine divines; the latter, are called Cisalpine. I will endeavour to present you with a short view of their different systems; first premising what the roman-catholic church considers to be of faith upon this important article of her creed.

X. 6.

2.—*Universal Doctrine of the Roman-Catholics respecting the Supremacy of the Pope.*

IT is an article of *the roman-catholic faith*, that the pope has, by divine right, 1. A supremacy of

rank; 2. A supremacy of jurisdiction in the spiritual concerns of the roman-catholic church; and 3. The principal authority in defining articles of faith. In consequence of these prerogatives, the pope holds a rank, splendidly pre-eminent, over the highest dignitaries of the church; has a right to convene councils, and preside over them by himself, or his legates, and to confirm the election of bishops. Every ecclesiastical cause may be brought to him, as the last resort, by appeal; he may promulgate definitions and formularies of faith to the universal church; and, when the general body, or a great majority of her prelates, have assented to them, either by formal consent, or tacit assent, all are bound to acquiesce in them. "Rome," they say, in such a case, "has spoken, and the cause "is determined." To the pope, in the opinion of all roman-catholics, belongs also a general superintendence of the concerns of the church; a right, when the canons provide no line of action, to direct the proceedings; and, in extraordinary cases, to act in opposition to the canons. In those spiritual concerns, in which, by strict right, his authority is not definitive, he is entitled to the highest respect and deference.—Thus far, there is no difference of opinion among roman-catholics: but here, they divaricate into the Transalpine and Cisalpine opinions. You must be aware, that I use the words Transalpine and Cisalpine in the sense in which they are generally used in these discussions; there certainly are some Transalpine territories in which the

Cisalpine opinions on papal power, prevail; but I am not aware of the existence of any Cisalpine territory, which adopts the Transalpine opinions.

X. 6.

Difference between Transalpine and Cisalpine Doctrines, on the Temporal and Spiritual Power of the Pope.

THE great difference between the Transalpine and Cisalpine divines, on the power of the pope, formerly was,—that the *Transalpine* divines attributed to the pope a divine right to the exercise, indirect at least, of temporal power, for effecting a spiritual good; and, in consequence of it, maintained, that the supreme power of every state was so far subject to the pope, that, when he deemed that the bad conduct of the sovereign rendered it essential to the good of the church, that he should reign no longer, the pope was then authorized, by his divine commission, to deprive him of his sovereignty, and absolve his subjects from their obligation of allegiance; and that even, on ordinary occasions, he might enforce obedience to his spiritual legislation and jurisdiction, by civil penalties.—On the other hand, the *Cisalpine* divines affirmed, that the pope had no right, either to interfere in temporal concerns, or to enforce obedience to his spiritual legislation or jurisdiction, by temporal power; and consequently, had no right to deprive a sovereign of his sovereignty, to absolve his subjects from their

allegiance, or to enforce his spiritual authority over either, by civil penalties. This difference of opinion exists now no longer, the Transalpine divines having at length adopted, on this subject, the Cisalpine opinions.

But, though, on this important point, both parties are at last agreed, they still differ on others.

In spiritual concerns, the *Transalpine* opinions ascribe to the pope a superiority, and controlling power over the whole church, should she chance to oppose his decrees, and consequently, over a general council, her representative; and the same superiority and controlling power, even in the ordinary course of business, over the canons of the universal church. They describe the pope as the fountain of all ecclesiastical order, jurisdiction, and dignity. They assign to him the power of judging all persons in spiritual concerns; of calling all spiritual causes to his cognizance; of constituting, suspending, and deposing bishops; of conferring all ecclesiastical dignities and benefices, in or out of his dominions, by paramount authority; of exempting individuals and communities from the jurisdiction of their prelates; of evoking to himself, or to judges appointed by him, any cause actually pending in an ecclesiastical court; and of receiving immediately appeals from all sentences of ecclesiastical courts, though they be inferior courts, from which there is a regular appeal to an intermediate superior court. They, further, ascribe to the pope the extraordinary prerogative of personal infallibility, when

he undertakes to issue a solemn decision on any point of faith.

The *Cisalpines* affirm, that in spirituals the pope is subject, in doctrine and discipline, to the church, and to a general council, representing her; that he is subject to the canons of the church, and cannot, except in an extreme case, dispense with them; that, even in such a case, his dispensation is subject to the judgment of the church; that the bishops derive their jurisdiction from God himself immediately, and not derivatively through the pope; that he has no right to confer bishoprics, or other spiritual benefices of any kind, the patronage of which, by common right, prescription, concordat, or any other general rule of the church, is vested in another. They admit, that an appeal lies to the pope from the sentence of the metropolitan; but assert, that no appeal lies to the pope, and that he can evoke no cause to himself, during the intermediate process. They affirm, that a general council may without, and even against, the pope's consent, reform the church. They deny his personal infallibility, and hold that he may be deposed by the church, or a general council, for heresy or schism; and they admit, that in an extreme case *, where

* Instances of which are, according to the account of Bossuet, so very rare, that it is scarcely possible to find true examples of such an extreme case in the course of several ages. "Ce qu'il a de principal, c'est, que les cas, auxquels "la France soutient le recours du pape au concile, sont "si rares, qu'à peine on peut en trouver de vrais examples, "en plusieurs siècles." Lettre du Bossuet au Cardinal d'Estrées. Oeuvres de Bossuet, vol. 9, p. 272, ed. Ben.

there is a great division of opinion, an appeal lies from the pope to a future general council.

In 1788, certain questions on the power of the pope, in temporal concerns, were sent by the desire of Mr. Pitt to several foreign universities, for their opinions upon them. We shall transcribe, in the Appendix, these questions, and the answers given to them by the universities.

Such are the Transalpine, and such the Cisalpine opinions, respecting the power of the pope; each, you must be sensible, recedes far from the extreme opinions, which the ending links of my supposed chain of opinion represent. Both are tolerated by the roman-catholic-church, but neither speaks its faith: this, as I have mentioned, is contained in the canon of the council of Florence, which I have cited. All the doctrine of that canon on the point in question, and nothing but that doctrine, is propounded by the roman-catholic church to be believed by the faithful:—with this doctrine, but with this doctrine only, and the consequences justly deducible from it, are the roman-catholics answerable.

X. 6.

4.—*Remarks on Doctor Southey's Crimination of the Roman-catholic Church, in consequence of the alleged intemperate Expressions of some of her Writers on the Pope's Authority.*

HITHERTO I have addressed you on the supposition, that the doctrines and sayings, with which you vituperate us, are to be found in respectable writers, and are fairly represented. You cite no author; you produce no document to prove your assertions. You must be aware how much this increases the difficulty of the defence which your work imposes upon us; you must, therefore, excuse me for expressing a doubt, whether any of the expressions are used by any roman-catholic writers in the sense which you put upon them; and whether they have ever been used by any author, whose character is such, as confers importance on his words.

You say, that the appellation of GOD has sometimes been applied to the pope. I admit it; but are you to learn, that, in the Bible, kings, princes, and magistrates are styled gods? not as divinities, or as partakers of the divine nature, but as persons eminently exalted, and exercising, by delegation, the power, justice or mercy, or some other attribute of the divinity. How often do the christian emperors mention, *nostra divinitas, nostra perennitas,*

nostra æternitas, nostræ divinæ vocis oraculum, nostra divina sancita,—our divinity, our eternity, the oracle of our divine voice, our divine laws? Read *Selden's Titles of Honor* *; read your own *Calvin's Commentary* on the Passages in the Psalms, in which David is called "son of God," Solomon is called "God," and judges are called "gods." He shows, that the word "God" is used in all these cases, not as an attribution of divinity to the persons to whom it is applied, but as describing their supereminent dignity. That, in some instances, this expression has been used in the secondary sense I have mentioned, and generally in bad taste, I willingly concede; in fact, many of the epithets, by which monarchs and other illustrious persons are described, will not bear the test of criticism: you know how Erasmus laughs at them in the *Encomium Moriæ*. I am very willing to join you in his laugh at them; but I am somewhat surprised to see you thus treat the matter seriously. To treat it thus, became Foulis, the author of the "History of Romish Treasons," that great arsenal of anti-catholic ribaldry, who probably supplied you with the observation; but surely, to make it a subject of solemn words was quite unworthy of you. I defy you to produce one instance, in which the word "God," used *potentialiter* to indicate the Supreme Being, has been applied by any catholic writer to the pope; or an instance, in which, used in any

* The first part, c. v. s. 3.

sense, any pope has accepted it, or applied it to himself? Then why is this odious, this invidious, this disgusting charge brought forward against us?

In the last page but one of your present chapter you say, "Even this monstrous proposition has "been advanced: that, although the catholic faith "teaches all virtue to be good, and all vice evil, "nevertheless, if the pope, through error, should "enjoin vices to be committed, and prohibit vir- "tues, the church would be bound to believe, that "vices were good, and virtue evil, and would sin "in conscience, were it to believe otherwise. He "could change the nature of things, and make "injustice justice."

Monstrous, indeed, would be such a doctrine! Equally monstrous is it to charge it on the roman-catholic church. Is not the charge founded altogether on a passage in the treatise of cardinal Bellarmine, *de Romano Pontifice* *? If this be the case, your charge is so brittle, that it will fall to dust the moment you open the page of Bellarmine which contains it.—You will then instantaneously see, not only that Bellarmine does not teach the doctrine which you ascribe to the church, but that he holds the direct reverse of it to be an acknowledged and indubitable truth. He states a proposition; controverts it; and professes to prove

* Liber iv. c. 5, de Decretis Morum, tom. 1. p. 721, ed. Lugdun. fol. 1596. And see in the same volume, p. 393, 394. 789, 790, where he notices the doctrine, that "the "pope is lord of the world."

its erroneousness, by showing, that if it were true, "it would authorize the pope to make virtue vice, "and vice virtue." Thus you will find that the proposition, which you impute to Bellarmine, is considered by him to be such a perfect absurdity, and so clear and acknowledged a falsehood, that a proposition leading to it, or from which it would follow as a consequence, must partake of its nature, and become absurd and false. Is not therefore the doctrine of the roman-catholics *diametrically contrary* to your representation of it?

A little further you say, that "the *commentators* "even gave the pope the blasphemous appellation "of OUR LORD GOD THE POPE." Two hundred years ago this charge was brought against the *commentators*, and two hundred years ago it was triumphantly refuted. You probably have copied it, at first or second hand, from the *Glossa final. cap. cum inter Extra. Joan.* xxii. Father Eudæmon Joannes, in his Apology for Father Garnet, published in 1610, informs us, that, "in the passage "in question, he found the word *Deum*, (God), "in *some* editions of the Gloss, and omitted in "others; that he therefore resolved to consult "the Zenzelini manuscript at the Vatican, which," he says, "might be seen every day;" and "that "he found that the real reading was, DOMINUM "NOSTRUM PAPAM,"—OUR LORD THE POPE. After this explanation, you will assuredly agree with me, that there is not greater reason to charge the commentators on the *Corpus Juris Canonici*,

with giving to the pope the appellation of God, than to charge the church of England with legalizing adultery, because, in *some* copies of the English Bible, the word "not" is omitted in the commandment against adultery.

In the same work, Bellarmine notices the proposition, that "the pope is lord of all the world." I presume you have this proposition in view, when you say, that "the romanists claimed for the pope "a plenitude of power; that he exercised it over "the princes of Christendom, in its fullest meaning; that he was king of kings, and lord of "lords." The proposition, in the words I have mentioned, is propounded, discussed, and *refuted* by Bellarmine. In fact, it is so absurd a proposition, as to make a refutation of it an almost total waste of time. Are you ignorant that it is rejected as the extreme of error, not to say, as the extreme of nonsense or impiety, by a countless number of the most eminent catholic writers? How many works, for asserting it, or propositions approaching to it, have been publicly censured? How many, as those of Santarellus and Malagola, have been condemned, in catholic countries, in the strongest terms of reprobation? Upon what ground, therefore, can you impute the affirmance of the proposition, thus, by them universally scouted, to the roman-catholics? At all events, justice required that you should name the authors in whose writings the propositions, you thus hold out to abomination, are to be found. I suspect that, if you were to do this, it would be

very generally seen, that the expressions in question were used by them, though in a very bad taste, to describe the supreme spiritual power of the church, and of the pope as her spiritual head, to govern all the faithful in spiritual concerns, and to control all the refractory, by spiritual censures, ending at last in excommunication. If this be so, do roman-catholics claim more power for their church, than is claimed by the protestants for theirs? Do not the ministers of your church claim the power of excommunication? To this, are not all its members, whether kings, lords, or subjects, equally liable? Does not every stone, that you thus throw at our church, equally hit your own?

Do the words, which you have cited from our authors, import more than this? If they do not, are not your own writers equally blameable? Think of the doctrines of your venerated Wickliffe; of your other venerated reformers of the middle ages; think of the primitive reformers; think of the extreme doctrines and extreme practices of Knox:—They incontestibly show, that, in their opinion, kings, lords, and subjects, may, if the good of the church require it, be punished by excommunication, and even by something beyond it.

Think of bishop Gibson's complaints of the constitutional rights of the temporal courts of this kingdom to issue prohibitions to the spiritual courts; of his intimation, that parliament should not meddle with the concerns of religion; of his dislike of the court of Delegates; of his objection to

lay chancellors, lay commissaries, and other lay officials in spiritual courts; of his exalted notions of the force of canons promulgated by the church; of his wish that no acts of parliament, respecting religion, should be passed, unless they were previously submitted to the clergy, and had their approbation; of his lamentation, that ecclesiastical process is served in the name of the king *. Is the spirit which suggested these complaints, objections, dislikes, and lamentations, in the eighteenth century, *very* different from the spirit of the advocates of the independence of the clergy of the civil power, in the middle ages?

In another part of your present chapter, you mention that there were ambassadors "who pro-"strated themselves before the pope, saying, 'O "thou! who takest away the sins of the world, "have mercy upon us!'" Perhaps you are indebted for this story to Foulis. Even that most violent author intimates what you wholly omit, that the pope resiled from the salutation. *Paulus Emilius*, on whose credit the tale rests altogether, relates, that the "city of Palermo, having grievously "offended the pope, sent some holy men to him as "ambassadors, who prostrated themselves at his "feet, AND SALUTED CHRIST THE LAMB OF GOD, "as before an altar and the blessed sacrament, and "suppliantly pronounced the mystic words of the "altar, 'Lamb of God, who takest away the sins

* See the preface to his Codex.

"of the world, have mercy on us! Who takest "away the sins of the world, have mercy on us! "Who takest away the sins of the world, give us "peace.' The pope replied by telling them, that "they acted like those who, after they had struck "Christ, saluted him as King of the Jews; that, "in reality, they were his enemies, although in "these words they wished him health." I transcribe in a note the historian's text*. Permit me to observe to you, that much of your charge is unfounded. You describe the ambassadors as addressing the pope as Lamb of God; the historian describes them as addressing Christ, the Lamb of God: You leave your readers to suppose that it was a mere matter of ceremony; the historian informs us, that it was an appeal made in a moment of great distress to the feelings of the pope, by bringing to his mind the supplicatory address in the mass to Christ the Lamb of God: You leave your readers to suppose that the address was favourably received;

* "Cùm apud pontificem de hac consternatione ageretur, "à Panormitanis missos ad eum oratores, viros sanctos; qui "ad pedes illius strati, velut pro aræ hostiâque, CHRISTUM "AGNUM DEI SALUTANTES, illa etiam ex altaris mysteriis "verba supplices effarentur,—"Qui tollis peccata mundi mise-"rere nostri:—Qui tollis peccata mundi miserere nostri:— "Qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem. Pontificem "respondisse, Panormitanos agere quod fecissent qui cùm "Christum pulsarent, eundem regem judæorum salutabant, "re hostes, fando salvere jubentes." *Pauli Emilii Veronensis Historici Clarissimi, De rebus gestis Francorum. Liber x. Chronicon de iisdem regibus ex Pharamundo usque ad Henricum ii. fol.* 328.

the historian shows that it was indignantly rejected.

You must excuse me for believing, that, if I had the command of more time, and a greater library than falls to my lot, I might discover other inaccuracies in the present chapter of your work. Be that as it may, permit me to request you will say, if you conscientiously believe that there is now a single catholic, who can justly be charged with the monstrous and blasphemous doctrines with which you attempt in this part of your work to brand us. Think of the Gallican declaration in 1682, which, so far as respects the independence of the secular on the spiritual power, in temporal concerns, is recognized by the whole roman-catholic world;—think of the opinions of the foreign universities, obtained by the direction of Mr. Pitt;—think of the oaths taken by the English, the Irish, and the Scottish catholics;—think of their conduct;—then declare explicitly, whether as a man, as a gentleman, or as a christian, you can, fairly and honourably, thus malign us?

I shall close this letter by a transcription of the following publication:—I hope it will vindicate us, in the opinion of all its readers, from the charges to which it refers.

X. 6.

5.—*Defence, by a Roman-catholic Divine, of the Roman-catholic Church against Charges brought against her by the present Bishop of Winchester.*

In the life of Mr. Pitt, recently published by doctor Tomline, the bishop of Winchester, a short account is given of the passing of the act of 1791, for the relief of the English roman-catholics; it occasioned considerable surprise among the catholics, and produced, from a secular clergyman of their communion, the following letter to his lordship:—

"My Lord,

"In your lordship's Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Pitt, vol. 2, p. 400, occurs the following passage:

"A petition had been presented to the House "of Commons, on the 7th of May 1789, by certain "persons calling themselves catholic dissenters, im- "plying by that title, that they did not believe all "the tenets generally maintained by roman-catho- "lics. The petitioners stated, that they and other "papists were subject to various penal laws, on ac- "count of principles, which they were supposed to "entertain, dangerous to society, and totally repug- "nant to political and civil liberty, and therefore "they thought it due to their country and to them- "selves publicly to disclaim and protest against the "five following doctrines:—1. That princes ex- "communicated by the pope, or by any authority

" of the see of Rome, may be deposed or murdered " by their subjects or other persons:—2. That im- " plicit obedience is due to the orders and decrees " of popes and general councils, even if they re- " quire open resistance to government, the subver- " sion of the laws and liberties of the country, and " the extermination of all persons not professing " the roman-catholic religion:—3. That the pope, " by his spiritual power, can dispense with the ob- " ligation of any compact or oath:—4. That not " only the pope, but even a priest has power, at his " will and pleasure, to pardon sins, and, conse- " quently, can absolve from the guilt of perjury, " rebellion and high treason:—5. That faith is " not to be kept with heretics *."

* " These five doctrines are to be found in the decrees " of councils, and other authentic documents of the church of " Rome, and have always been considered as forming part of " the faith of papists." *Note in the Bishop's Life of Mr. Pitt.*

" Allow me to observe, my lord, that the account given above, so far from being accurate, contains a gross misrepresentation, which, from respect to your lordship, I am willing to believe is not a wilful one. It is true, that the petitioners in 1789 styled themselves *catholic dissenters*. It is equally true, that many catholics objected to the title assumed by the petitioners; and for this reason, that they conceived the term dissenters to be appropriate to those who deserted the antient faith in the sixteenth century, not to such as were inheritors of it in the present times. But no thinking man before your

lordship ever insinuated, that the petitioners were dissenters from other catholics, in respect to the doctrines against which they protested.

"Neither did the petitioners insinuate, that the tenets which they disclaimed were maintained by any other catholics whomsoever: They knew indeed that such tenets had been *imputed* to other catholics, as well as to themselves; but as they were petitioning for themselves only, they confined the disclaimer to themselves.

"It is not, however, of these inaccuracies, but of the note which follows them, that the catholics chiefly complain *. The statement in that note is not only erroneous in point of fact, but is calculated to make on the public mind an impression most injurious to their interests, by representing them as members of a church which inculcates, "as part "of its faith," doctrines subversive of civil allegiance and moral duty; doctrines not to be tolerated by any government, nor in any society. On what this representation may be grounded, few readers of the Memoirs will stay to inquire; they will adopt it as true on the authority of the writer.

"The catholics deny that the five doctrines in question ever formed part of their faith. They challenge your lordship to prove your assertion; they call on you to produce, if you can, "the de-"crees of councils, and the authentic documents of "the church of Rome, in which they are to be "found." If you cannot, they trust you will have

* See note quoted in preceding page.

the courage to come forward, and with the honesty of a man, and the charity of a christian, acknowledge that you have been misled.

"Your lordship says, that "these five doctrines "have always been considered as forming part of the "faith of papists;" but by whom?—by catholics? Most certainly not; *they* have always disclaimed them. By their adversaries? But you must be aware that little credit is due to adversaries, especially when the passions of those adversaries have been heated, and their judgments warped, by theological controversy.

"But what is the meaning of the words "have "always been?" They seem to imply, that the doctrines in question were not only considered *formerly*, but are also considered *now*, as making part of the catholic faith. It is however impossible that so unfounded a notion can exist at the present day. Your lordship cannot be ignorant, that, in 1788, the catholic universities of Louvain, Douay, Paris, Alcala, Valladolid and Salamanca, when those learned bodies were consulted to satisfy Mr. Pitt, spurned the imputation as most foul, false and calumnious. You cannot be ignorant that, in 1791, Pius VI., in his letter to the roman-catholic archbishops of Ireland, not only condemned these doctrines, but declared that they had been imputed to the holy see merely for the purpose of calumniating it*. You cannot be ignorant, that the British and

* See substance of Sir John Cox Hippesley's speech, May 18, 1810. Appendix.

Irish catholics seized the first opportunity, which was offered to them, of disclaiming such doctrines upon oath. You cannot be ignorant, that that very oath had been prescribed by the legislature, as satisfactory evidence of the religious principles of those who should take it.—What better proof can be desired or devised? The declaration of the chief bishop of the catholic church, the testimony of the catholic universities, the oaths of the catholics, both laity and clergy, of the united kingdom, and the authority of the legislature, all combine to show, that these five doctrines form no part of the catholic faith. Certainly the most obstinate prejudice must yield to evidence so general and conclusive.

"I have the honor to be, &c.

"London, June 12, 1821. A CATHOLIC."

LETTER XI.

RISE OF THE REFORMATION—THE MENDICANT ORDERS—PERSECUTION UNDER THE HOUSE OF LANCASTER.

SIR,

"YOU have now reached a subject, upon which I wish you had given us a volume, instead of a chapter,—the preliminaries of Luther's reformation. In Germany, they are often styled *Reformatio ante Reformationem*. It is intimated, in the preface to Beausobre's "History of the Reformation," that he had written a work on this subject: I have made many inquiries for it, both in the London and the foreign markets, without success. A good account of this portion of ecclesiastical history is one of the greatest wants of literature.

It is known, that, on the death of Manes, the founder of the heresy which derives its origin and name from him, his European followers retreated into the East; that they returned into Europe about the beginning of the ninth century; and, during that and the following centuries, spread themselves, under the various appellations of Cathari, Paulicians, Albigenses, Popellicans, Bogards, and Brethren of the Free-Spirit, into several sects, equally hostile to church and state.

On the religious tenets of the ancient Manichees,

Beausobre *, doctor Lardner †, and Mr. Alban Butler ‡, have left us nothing to desire. But, in respect to their tenets on civil power and property, these authors are almost entirely silent. The religious tenets of the Manichean sectaries, in the middle ages, have been ably discussed by Bossuet ||, father Persons §, Mr. Alban Butler ¶, and Basnage ** ; but these writers have said little on their political tenets. I beg leave to mention, that those, who desire to investigate this subject, should consult *Monetæ adversus Catharos et Valdenses, libri quinque, fol. Romæ*, 1743.

I wish you to undertake this investigation ; but I fear you could not complete it, in the manner you and your friends would wish, without ransacking foreign libraries. The great point for investigation is, whether these sectaries did not, by their disorganizing tenets, prelude to the doctrine of liberty and equality, so frightfully propagated in our time?

* Histoire Critique de Manichée et de Manichéisme: 2 vols. 4to.

† Credibility of the Gospel History, XLIII.

‡ Note in his Life of St. Augustine.

|| Variations, livre xii.

§ Three Conversions of England, part iii. c. 3. 6.

¶ Note in his Life of St. Dominick.

** Hist. des Eglises Reformées, 2 vols. 4to.

XI. 1.

Rise of the Reformation—Persecution under the House of Lancaster.

When I inserted, in my "Historical Memoirs "of the English, Irish, and Scottish Catholics," an account of "the preliminaries of the reforma- "tion *," I gave to the subject all the attention, and made every research, that the time, which I could bestow upon it, allowed. I have frequently reconsidered this part of my work, and have not discovered any thing which appears to me to require alteration.

I shall, therefore, now re-state what I have inserted in that work,—the opinion of Mosheim †, that, "before the Reformation, there lay concealed, "in almost every part of Europe, particularly in "Bohemia, Moravia, Switzerland and Germany, "many persons who adhered tenaciously to the "following doctrine, which the Waldenses, Wick- "liffites, and Hussites, had maintained; some in "a disguised, others in a more open and public "manner:—that the kingdom of Christ was an "assembly of true and real saints, and ought, "therefore, to be inaccessible to the wicked and "unrighteous, and also, exempt from those institu- "tions which human prudence suggests, to oppose

* Vol. 1, p. 93.
† Cent. xvi. c. 3. 5. 2. 5.

" the progress of iniquity, or to correct or reform " transgressions."

" From these principles they inferred, that all " things ought to be in common among the faith- " ful; that taking interest for the loan of money " ought to be entirely abolished; that, in the king- " dom of Christ, civil magistrates were absolutely " useless; and that God still continued to reveal " his will to chosen men." In a future part of this letter, I shall transcribe, from the chapter of your work, which is the subject of this letter, passages which completely accord with that which I have cited from Mosheim.

Such were *the principles* of these sectaries. How did they carry them *into execution?* Confining the answer to the English Lollards,—What insurrections, what rapine, what murders, were produced by them! They murdered the chancellor, and primate, Sudbury; the lord treasurer Hales; the chief justice Cavendish: They sought to murder the king; to exterminate the nobility, the dignitaries, and the principal functionaries of the clergy. " The celebrated John Ball," says Walsingham *, " taught the perverse dogmas, and false opinions, " and raving doctrines of Wickliffe. Being, upon " this account, prohibited by his bishop from preach- " ing in the churches, he went to villages and towns " to preach to them. He was excommunicated, " but ventured to preach, and was sent to prison,

* Walsingham, p. 275. 228. 385.

"where he announced his immediate delivery by "20,000 men. This actually happened; and, "having deliberated with them, he headed them, "instigating them to greater enormities. At "Blackheath, where 20,000 men were assembled, "he thus began his address to them:

"When Adam delv'd, and Eve span,
"Who was then the gentleman?

"They fixed placards on the doors of the churches "of London, announcing that they were ready, to "the number of 100,000, to rise against all who "did not relish them. To this they were invited "by the power and contrivance of one John Old-"castle." In the following year they endeavoured to raise a rebellion in St. Giles's Fields, where Oldcastle had appointed them to rendezvous.—Seditious proceedings of a similar nature took place, about the same time, in different parts of England.

The Albigenses, in the south of France, exceeded the Lollards, both in the wildness of their doctrine, and the ferocity of their proceedings.

Such, then, were the principles of the sectarians, and such the enormities to which they led. You yourself admit, that Wickliffe held "some erro-"neous opinions, some fantastic ones, and some "that, in their moral and political consequences, "were most dangerous." (We have just seen what Walsingham says of Wickliffe and his doctrines). Is it not surprising that, almost in the line immediately following, you call him "a great and admi-"rable man." Is not this exaggerated eulogy?

Should a man be pronounced great and admirable, some of whose opinions are admitted to have been "erroneous," some to have been "fantastic," and some to have been "most dangerous?" Should it be done in this age, where liberty and equality, in the disorganizing sense of those words, are so loudly called for, and the loudness of the call increases every day? In respect to the tenets of the Lollards, I beg leave to ask, if contemporary writers do not unanimously declare, that they originated with Wickliffe? Should you not have mentioned with praise, the christian spirit and forbearance of the clergy of those times, who, although he had so vehemently attacked both their doctrines and their possessions, permitted him to spend his last days in peace and privacy?

I have shortly mentioned the dreadful effects produced by these dangerous opinions. To prevent them from spreading, the legislature, in the reign of Henry IV. had passed the statute *de Hæretico comburendo*: It authorized the bishops to proceed against heretics, and to punish them by imprisonment, and fine to the king; and enacted, that, if they should refuse to abjure their heretical pravity, or, after their abjuration, should relapse into it, they should be delivered to the sheriff, and burned on a high place, before the people. This statute was succeeded by others. You cannot condemn these legislative proceedings more than I do; they were an infraction of the rights of conscience; they made religious opinion a test of

political principle; and thus confounded principle, with which the legislature has no concern, with action, its only proper object.

Under these statutes many suffered. Your account of their sufferings is drawn with admirable eloquence and feeling.

I sympathize in what you write; and trust that, when I shall hereafter mention the sufferings of the roman catholics, under the reigns of Henry VIII. Edward VI. Elizabeth, and the three first princes of the Stuart line, you will read those pages with equal sympathy.

Before I conclude my letter, I beg leave to express some surprise at the tenderness with which you treat Sir John Oldcastle, often called Lord Cobham. You describe him as a *victim*; and, when you come to his final catastrophe, you tell us, that "the remainder of his history is perplexed by "contradictory statements, from which nothing "certain can be collected, but the last results." Is this so? Had not his practices with the Lollards, in their most revolutionary designs, and his encouragement of them, been discovered? Had he not defied the process of the spiritual courts? Had not Henry V. declared in his proclamation, that the Lollards meant to destroy him, his brothers, and several of the spiritual and temporal lords? to confiscate the possessions of the church; to secularize the religious orders; to divide the realm into confederate districts; and to appoint Sir John Oldcastle president of the commonwealth?

On his arraignment, did he venture to assert his innocence? Did he not deny the king's title to the crown? Did not the sentence pronounced upon him, declare, that he should both be hanged as a traitor, and burned as a heretic? It is almost ridiculous to ask,—did he not impiously prophecy, that he should rise on the third day? Surely you do not concur with a notorious writer, whom you often praise, John Fox, the martyrologist, who ranks several of these convicted rebels among his saints!

If it were allowed by the proper limits of these Letters, I should have offered you some considerations on the Waldenses, Albigenses, and the Hussites; on some decrees of the council of Constance; and on the inquisition, with which the subject is connected. I have expressed myself fully on all these topics, in the chapter of my Historical Memoirs on the Preliminaries of the Reformation*: It was written with care, and I trust with impartiality: I beg leave to refer you to it.

In one part of your present chapter, you inform us, "that indignation against spiritual tyranny, un-"compromising sincerity, and intrepid zeal, made "the Lollards formidable to the hierarchy." Most protestant writers describe them in the same tone of lofty eulogy; but do they convey the whole truth? How do you yourself afterwards describe them in this very chapter?

"Undoubtedly the Lollards," say you, "were

* Vol. 1, c. 10.

"highly dangerous at this time: if there were "some among them, whose view and wishes did not "go beyond a just and salutary reformation, the "greater number were eager for havoc, and held "opinions which were incompatible with the peace "of society. They would have stript the monas- "teries; confiscated the church lands; and pro- "claimed the principle, 'that the saints should "possess the earth.' The public safety required, "that such opinions should be repressed; and, "founded, as they were, in gross error, and leading "to direct and enormous evil, the church would "have deserved the approbation of impartial pos- "terity, if it had proceeded temperately and justly "in repressing them. But the course which the "church pursued, was equally impolitic and iniqui- "tous, by making transubstantiation the test of "heresy; and insisting, on pain of the stake, upon "the belief of a proposition, which no man could "believe, unless he disregarded the evidence of his "senses; they gave the Lollards all the advantage, "which men derive from the reputation and the "merit of suffering in the cause of truth."*

* In this sentence, I cannot but dislike the manner in which you mention transubstantiation; and believing, that, on the occasions of which you are speaking, the judges frequently acted from errors of judgment, or in moments of exaltation, I wish you had substituted some other word for "iniqui- "tous:"—With these exceptions, I subscribe to it in all parts.

But permit me to observe, that you cannot criminate the judges, who condemned the Lollards for not believing transubstantiation, without condemning the laws, which, in subsequent times, condemned the catholics for believing it, or conforming to those religious rites, which they found established, and which had made a part of the constitution, both of the church and state, of England, from the earliest introduction of christianity till their own time. I shall advert to this circumstance in a future letter. When you read it, you will, I hope, join me in a tear of sympathy on the sufferings, both of the priests and their flocks, for their belief of transubstantiation. Even now, do you not sympathize with the roman-catholic peers, the Howards, the Talbots, the Stourtons, the Arundells, the Cliffords, and the Petres, who, in consequence of their belief of transubstantiation, are deprived of their hereditary seats in Parliament?

XI. 2.

The Mendicant and other Religious Orders of the Roman-catholic Church.

In your perusal of the gospel, you must have remarked the words, "If thou desire to be perfect, "go, and sell all thou hast, and give it to the "poor*."—"If any man come after me, let him "deny himself†."—"It is a good thing not to

* Matt. xix.

† Matt. xvi.

" touch a woman."—" He who gives his virgin in " marriage does well, but he who gives her not " does better."—Is it not with justice that the roman-catholic church considers these intimations, not as precepts, the observance of which is necessary to salvation, but as counsels to those, who, to use the words of Christ himself, desire to be perfect? Do they not imply, that a voluntary renunciation of riches, a voluntary renunciation of our will, and a voluntary renunciation of sensual, but lawful pleasure, are acceptable to God? Do we not imitate, by the first, the voluntary poverty of our holy Redeemer?—by the second, his voluntary obedience to the will of his Eternal Father, and to the will of his Virgin Mother?—by the third, his immaculate purity? To this humble imitation of Christ, the mendicant and the other religious orders of the catholic church aspire; and their different rules prescribe different modes, suited to the various characters and tempers of mankind, of carrying these councils into execution. In what age of the church were not such observances practised? In what, have they not been praised by the wise and the good?

The services, which the *Benedictines* have rendered to religion and literature, are mentioned by an author, not unknown to you, in terms, which I am delighted to read, and which I shall transcribe with pleasure in the fifteenth of these Letters.

In the 8th century, certain respectable ecclesiastics formed themselves into a kind of middle order,

between the monks and the secular clergy, and, by degrees, obtained the appellation of *the regular canons of St. Augustine*, from their observance of the rules and suggestions laid down by that great man in his Epistles. They kept public schools for the instruction of youth, and exercised themselves in a variety of functions, which rendered them extremely useful to the church.

For many ages, the Benedictines, and the congregations which emanated from them, and the canons regulars of St. Augustine, constituted the only religious orders in the West; but, in the 12th century, the mendicant orders arose: these were the Franciscans, the Dominicans, the Carmelites, and the hermits of St. Augustine. You confine your vituperations to the Franciscans and the Dominicans; I shall, therefore, say nothing of the two other mendicant orders.

As to *the Franciscans*,—let me conjure you to collect the testimony, not of the ribald press, not of superficial travellers, not of philosophic witlings, but of impartial, intelligent, and honourable men; and, I beg leave to add, of the catholic prelacy; for, after all, these form the best tribunal to which the question can be referred. Ask these, what they thought of the friars? They will answer unanimously,—that their services to the church of God were incalculable; that they chiefly exerted themselves in the laborious parts of the sacred ministry, in hospitals, in prisons, among the lower orders of the poor; that wherever there was a fire, an inun-

dation, a pestilential disorder, a raging plague; wherever there was labour, or danger, and a total absence of reward, the Franciscans were sure to be found. But it was not only in the humbler walks of the ministry that they laboured: many were eminent for their learning; many filled the highest dignities of the church; many were successfully employed in the most important embassies; some have governed states; some have worn the tiara.

To this, what have you to oppose?—Some legends and tales, which the friars laugh at as much as you do; and some narratives, which eminent writers have thought respectable, although you think of them differently. You deride *the stigmata*:—it would give me great pleasure to hear the verity of them coolly and argumentatively discussed by you, and some learned member of the seraphic order.—I must assure you, that you would not find it so easy a matter, as you imagine, to nonplus him; and that, if you had fought the battle with my late friend, father O'Leary, you might not have fared with him better than the bishop of Cloyne, who quarrelled with him about purgatory, and to whom he observed, that "his lordship might go farther, "and fare worse."

Most of what I have said on the Franciscans applies to the *Dominicans*; but with this difference,—that these exerted themselves in a particular manner, in public preaching, and in teaching the philosophical and theological learning of the schools. You are one of the few, whom I can expect to

find equal admirers, with myself, of the mental powers of *St. Thomas Aquinas*. Do I exaggerate, when I say, that his writings discover a strength of mind equal, (though applied in a very different manner), to that of Sir Isaac Newton? Is there an objection urged by Hume, against natural or revealed religion, which St. Thomas has not both propounded and answered? How pleasing would it be to dwell on such a topic!—You charge St. Dominick with taking an active part in the establishment of the inquisition. This is positively denied by *Touron*, his best biographer; and, I believe, by every other writer of his order. Their zealous denial of it does them honour: from its origin, till the close of the 17th century, the constitution and proceedings of that tribunal were very objectionable.

But, let us return to the religious orders.—At different times, *convents of nuns* were founded: their institutes corresponded with those of the religious orders and congregations, which we have noticed. You are extensively acquainted with history, and have travelled in catholic countries; you, therefore, know what thousands of these venerable ladies were employed in the important duty of education: that, from an early æra of christianity till the present time, it has been an universal opinion, that no education for the female sex is equal to that which they receive in convents. You know the heroic exertions among the poor, the sick, and the prisoners, of those angels upon earth,

the *sisters of charity*; and the pious lives and penitential austerities of the *recluses*. You also know, that, when the hour of trial came, the conduct of the nuns was uniformly edifying; on every occasion they exhibited the greatest patience, fortitude, and adherence to principle. The French philosophers had unceasingly predicted, that the doors of the convents would no sooner be opened, and their inmates legally emancipated from their vows, than they would rush to freedom, marriage, and dissipation. Of this there was hardly an instance; whilst the conduct of an immense number invariably showed, how sincerely they despised, both the blandishments and the terrors of the world which they had quitted. Some braved persecution, and even death itself, in its most hideous form: On one occasion, the fatal cart conveyed the superior of a convent, and all her cloisteral family, to the guillotine: in the road to it they sung, in unison, the litanies of the Virgin Mary. At first, they were received with curses, ribaldry, and the other usual abominations of a French mob; but it was not long before the serene demeanor and pious chaunt of these heroic sufferers, subdued the surrounding brutality; and the multitude attended them, in respectful silence, to the place of execution.—The cart moved slowly: all the while the nuns continued the pious strain;—when it had reached the guillotine, each, till the instrument of death fell on her, sustained it.—As each died, the sound became proportionably weaker; at last,

the superior's single note was heard, and soon heard no more. For once, the French mob was affected: in silence, and apparently with some compunctious visitations, they returned to their homes.

Throughout their dispersion, the nuns retained, undiminished, their attachments to their religious rule; whenever opportunity offered, they formed themselves into bands for its observance, and the insulated individual seldom failed to practise it to the utmost of her power. Sometimes, by succession or heirship, or by some other circumstance, wealth came in their way; but their spare diet, their seclusion from the world, and regular prayer continued; and what was not necessary to supply their wants, of the first necessity, was charitably distributed.—Was it not good for a nation, that such celestial beings should reside among them?

In this stage of our controversy, it may not be improper to make what, in mercantile transactions, is termed *a rest*; and thus show, as it were on a balance sheet which side, in the actual state of the account between us, has the preponderance. You sum your charge in these words: "The church of "Rome appears to have delighted in abusing the "credibility of mankind, and to have pleased itself "with discovering, how far it was possible to sub- "due and degrade the human intellect, as an "eastern despot measures his own greatness by the "servile prostration of his subjects."

In the beginning of the chapter which contains this sentence, you inform your readers, that "the "corruptions, doctrinal and practical, of the roman "church, were studiously kept out of view by the "writers, who still maintain the infallibility of that "church."

Are you, then, acquainted with no writers in the middle ages, who, at the same time that they maintained the infallibility of the roman-catholic church in matters of faith, exposed, in the strongest terms, and the most unequivocal language, the corruptions which had found their way into her, and even into her sanctuary? Are you ignorant of the discourses published, and of the sermons preached, at the council of Constance, Basil and Pisa?—of the writings of Grossetête, Gersen, d'Ailly, and the many other ecclesiastical personages, whose treatises, exposing the extortions of the roman see and its officers, and the irregularities of the clergy, fill the two well-known volumes of "*Brown's Fasciculus?*" Is the letter of St. Bernard to pope Eugenius IV. unknown to you? Does it not announce, in the boldest language, and with the most glowing eloquence, the failings of the popes, and their functionaries, and all the corrupt practices which then existed in the church? Was not this letter transcribed, and read, and admired, in every part of Christendom?

Descending lower, let me request you to peruse the following long extract from a later work,—a work, not written in a corner,—not put into the hands of a few,—but written by the eagle of Meaux;

anxiously circulated in every part of the globe, and particularly addressed to protestants, and designed for their perusal,—I mean, *the History of the Variations of the Protestant Churches,*" by Bossuet. I shall present you with a translation of the first section of this great work. After perusing it, will you venture to repeat, that the roman-catholic writers, who maintain the infallibility of their church, keep its corruptions out of view? Or that the church, whose writers thus detail the corruptions in her, either sought, or seeks, to subdue or degrade her subjects, or to prostrate their intellects?

" A reformation of church discipline," says Bossuet, " was wished for several ages since. '*Who* " *will grant me,*' cried St. Bernard, '*to see, before* " *I die, the church of God, such as she was in* " *primitive times*?*' If this holy man had any " thing to regret at his death, it was, that he had " not seen so happy a change. His whole life " long he bemoaned the grievances of the church; " he never ceased giving notice of them to the " people, the clergy, the bishops, and popes themselves: Nor did he conceal his sentiments on " this head, from his own religious, who par- " took of his afflictions in their solitude; and so " much the more gratefully extolled the divine " goodness, which had drawn them to it, as the " world was more universally corrupted. Disorders

* Bern. Epist. 257, ad Eug. Papam.

" had but augmented since that time. The roman " church, the mother of churches, which had, for " nine whole ages, by setting first the example of " an exact observance of ecclesiastical discipline, " maintained it, throughout the universe, to her " utmost power, was not exempt from evil; and " so long since as the council of *Vienne*, a great " prelate, commissioned by the pope to prepare " matters to be treated upon, laid it down for a " groundwork to the whole *assembly*, that they " ought *to reform the church in the head and* " *members*. The great schism, which happened " soon after, made his saying current, not among " particular doctors only, as *Gersen*, *Peter d'Ailly*, " and other great men of those times, but in coun- " cils too; and nothing was more frequently re- " peated, in those of *Pisa* and *Constance*. What " happened in the council of Basil, where a refor- " mation was unfortunately eluded, and the church " re-involved in new divisions, is well known. The " disorders of the clergy, chiefly of those in Ger- " many, were represented in this manner, to " Eugenius IV. by cardinal Julian: '*These dis-* " *orders*,' said he, '*excite the people's hatred* " *against the whole ecclesiastical order; and,* " *should they not be corrected, it is to be feared,* " *lest the laity, like the Hussites, fall foul on the* " *clergy, as they loudly threaten us.*' If the " clergy of Germany were not speedily reformed, " he foretold, that to the heresy of Bohemia, even

" *though it were extinguished,* another still more " dangerous *would soon succeed*; '*for it will be* " *said,*' proceeded he, '*that the clergy are in-* " *corrigible, and will apply no remedy to these dis-* " *orders. When they shall find no hopes of our* " *amendment,*' continued this great cardinal, '*then* " *will they fall foul upon us. The minds of men* " *are big with expectations of what measures will* " *be taken; and full ripe they seem for something* " *tragical! The rancour they have imbibed* " *against us becomes manifest; they will soon* " *think it an agreeable sacrifice to God, to plunder* " *and abuse ecclesiastics, as abandoned to extreme* " *disorder, and hateful to God and man; the pre-* " *sent, but small, remains of respect to the sacred* " *order, will shortly be quite extinguished. The* " *blame of all these abuses will be thrown on the* " *court of Rome, which will be reckoned the sole* " *cause thereof,* because it had neglected to apply " the necessary remedy.' He afterwards spoke more " emphatically: '*I see,*' said he, '*the axe is at* " *the root; the tree begins to bend, and instead of* " *propping it, whilst we may, we hasten its fall.*' " He foresees a speedy desolation in the *German* " *clergy.* The desire of taking from them their " temporal goods was to be the first spring of " motion. '*Bodies and souls,*' says he, '*will* " *perish together. God hides from us the pros-* " *pect of our danger, as he is used to do with* " *those he designs to punish. We see the fire*

" *enkindled before us, and yet run headlong* " *into it*.*'

" Thus did this *cardinal*, the greatest man of " his time, lament, in the fifteenth century, the " abuses of those days, and foresee their dreadful " consequences; whereby he seems to have fore- " told those evils, in which Luther was just going " to involve all Christendom, beginning by Ger- " many. Nor was he mistaken, when he fore- " boded, that a despised *reformation*, and redoubled " hatred against the clergy, would speedily bring " forth a sect more terrible to the church, than " that of the *Bohemians*. Under Luther's banner " did this sect appear; and, assuming the title of " *reformers*, glorified they had fulfilled all Christ- " endom's desires, inasmuch as a reformation had " been long the desire of catholics, people, doctors, " and prelates. In order, therefore, to authorize " this pretended *reformation*, whatsoever church- " writers had said against the disorders, both of " the people, and even of the clergy, was collected " with great industry; but in this lay a manifest " conceit, there not being so much as one of all " the passages alleged, wherein those doctors ever " dreamt of altering the church's faith; of cor- " recting her worship, which chiefly consisted in " the sacrifice of the altar; of subverting the au- " thority of her prelates, that of the pope espe-

* Ep. 1, Juliani Cardinalis, ad Eug. IV. int. Opusc. Æneæ Silvii, p. 66. 68. 76.

" cially,—the very scope which this whole reforma-
" tion, introduced by Luther, tended to.

" Protestants cite to us St. Bernard *, who,
" enumerating the church grievances,—all those
" she underwent in the beginning during the per-
" secutions; those she suffered from heresies in her
" progress; and those she was exposed unto, in
" latter days, by the depravation of manners,—
" allows these to be far more dreadful, because
" they taint the very vitals, and spread infection
" through all the members of the church. Whence,
" concludes this great man, the church may truly
" say, with Isaiah †, '*her most painful and most*
" *grievous bitterness is in peace.*' When left in
" peace by *infidels*, and unmolested by *heretics*,
" she is most dangerously assaulted by the depraved
" manners of her own children.' Even this were
" enough to show, he does not, like *our reformers*,
" bewail the errors the church had fallen into, (on
" the contrary, he represents her as secure on that
" side), but such evils only as proceeded from re-
" laxed discipline; accordingly, when, instead of
" *discipline*, the church's dogmata were attacked
" by turbulent and restless men, such as *Peter de*
" *Bruis*, as *Henry*, as *Arnold of Bresse*, this
" great man would never suffer their weakening so
" much as one of them, but fought invincibly, as
" well for the *faith of the church*, as for the *autho-*
" *rity* of her prelates ‡.

* Bern. Serm. 33, in Cant. † Isaiah, xxxviii.
‡ Bern. Serm. in Cant. 65, 66.

"The case is the same with the rest of the catho-
"lic doctors, who, in the succeeding ages, lamented
"abuses, and demanded a *reformation* of them. Of
"all these, the most renowned is *Gersen*; and none
"more loudly called for it in the church's head
"and members. In a sermon he made after the
"council of Pisa, before Alexander V., he intro-
"duces the church, requesting of the pope the re-
"formation, and a re-establishment of the kingdom
"of *Israel*. But, to show he complained of no
"error that could be observed in the church's doc-
"trine, he addresses the pope in these words:—
"'*Why*,' says he, 'do you not send to the Indians,
"whose faith may easily have been corrupted, they
"not being united to the church of Rome, whence
"certainty of faith must be derived*?' His master,
"cardinal *Peter d'Ailly*, sighed also for a *refor-*
"*mation*; but the principle he went upon was far
"different from that of *Luther*, who, writing to
"*Melancthon*, gives it for a maxim, '*that sound*
"*doctrine could not subsist whilst the pope's au-*
"*thority subsisted* †;' whereas this cardinal was of
"opinion ‡, *that the members of the church, being*
"*separated from their head during the schism,*
"*and there being no administrator and apostolical*
"*director*, namely, *no pope*, *that all the church*
"*acknowledged, it was not to be hoped that a re-*
"*formation could be well brought about.* Thus,

* Gers. Serm. de Ascensu Dom. ad Al. V.

† Sleid. lib. vii. fol. 112.

‡ Con. i, de San. Lud.

" one made the *reformation* to depend on the sub-
" version of *papacy*; the other, on the perfect re-
" setting of that sacred *authority*, which was esta-
" blished by *Jesus Christ*, on purpose to keep up
" unity among its members, and withhold all in
" their secular duties.

" There were then two different sorts of people,
" who demanded a *reformation*: One, the truly
" peaceable, and true children of the church, with-
" out bitterness, bewailed her grievances; and with
" respect, proposed a reformation of them, and in
" humility bore with a delay. And, so far from
" desiring that this might be procured by schism;
" on the contrary, they looked upon a schism by
" far the greatest of all evils. In the midst of
" these abuses, they admired the providence of
" God, who, according to his promises, knew how
" to preserve the church's faith; and though a *re-*
" *formation* of manners seemed denied them, free
" from all sourness and passion, they held them-
" selves happy enough, that nothing hindered them
" from beginning at home, and perfectly reforming
" there. These were the strong ones of the church,
" whose faith no temptation could shake, or make
" them swerve from *unity*. There was, besides
" these, a kind of proud spirits, full fraught with
" spleen and bitterness, who, struck with the dis-
" orders they saw predominant in the *church*, espe-
" cially in her *ministers*, did not believe the pro-
" mises of her eternal duration could still subsist
" amidst such abuses; whereas the Son of God had

"taught respect to the *chair of Moses*, notwithstanding the evil actions of the *scribes and pharisees that sat therein**. These became proud, and thereby weak; they yielded to the temptation which, in hatred to those that preside in it, inclines to hate the *chair* itself. And, as if man's wickedness could make void the work of God, the aversion they had conceived against the *teachers*, made them both hate the doctrine they taught, and the authority they had received from God to teach: Such were the *Vandois and Albigenses*; such were *John Wickliff* and *John Huss*. The common lure, by which they enticed weak souls into their toils, was this hatred they inspired them with against *church pastors*. And this spirit of bitterness had so thoroughly bent them on a rupture, that no wonder if, in *Luther*'s time, when invectives and animosities were carried to the highest pitch, the most violent rupture, and the greatest apostacy, of course, ensued, that perchance, till then, ever had been seen in Christendom."

I could have translated, or transcribed, many passages from other distinguished writers of our church, in which the existence and extent of abuses in the roman-catholic church are mentioned, in terms equally strong and explicit. I have preferred that which I have selected, on account of the high character of its author; and because, while it

* Matt. xxiii. 2, 3.

abundantly refutes your charge against the roman-catholic church, of concealing her abuses, it propounds, in the clearest terms, the catholic doctrine respecting her infallibility. We admit, that individual members of our church may both err in faith, and be guilty of immorality; but we also assert, that the church cannot err in faith: this infallibility, and this infallibility only, we ascribe to her. I must add, that this celebrated work of Bossuet, on the Variations of the Protestant Churches, from which I have presented you with the foregoing extract, was translated into the English language, by father Browne, of the Society of Jesus, for the instruction of the English catholics, in 1742, in two octavo volumes: so little do catholics deserve the imputation of concealment, with which you so liberally charge them.

After perusing the full and unreserved exposure, by one of the most eminent and most popular writers of the church of Rome, of the abuses which prevailed in her during the middle ages, you will not, I am sure, renew this charge.

But, while you dilate so much at length, and with such evident complacency, on the circumstances which you think disgrace the church of Rome, did not justice require you to place, in as full a view, and to dwell as much, and as long, on those topics, which are honourable to her? You mention some superstitions: Why are you almost wholly silent on the edifying scenes, with which the history of the church, during the middle ages,

is replete? the numerous councils held in every part of Christendom? their admirable canons? their regulations for preserving the purity and integrity of faith; for promoting, in every possible manner, both the spiritual and temporal welfare of mankind? You mention some persons, whose conduct you deservedly censure: Why did you not also mention some, at least, of those holy men, whose heroic virtues you yourself cannot deny? You mention some ridiculous legends: Why are you wholly silent on the writings of the Gerberts, the Bernards, the Aquinases, the Gersens, the Bacons? Why not mention Thomas à Kempis's golden volume? or Thaulerus, of whom Luther, your patriarch, speaks in such lofty terms of praise? Why conceal the many institutions for the redemption of captives, and for the conversion of barbarians, with which the catholic church abounded in the times, which you so much vituperate? her various charitable institutions; her schools? the countless exertions of individuals for these, and a hundred other purposes of christian piety or beneficence? Should not all and every one of these hold their due place in a work, which bears for its title "the "Book of the Church?" Where is that good taste, for which you are deservedly admired, when, turning aside from these pleasing and glorious themes,—from virtues that do honour to man, and the relations of which are so productive of useful and heroic deeds, you luxuriate in the descriptions of those scenes, which christianity laments, repu-

diates, and wishes to be forgotten? But God never abandoned for a moment his church. Involve and involve again her disasters:—Make the tares as abundant as you wish them to be thought, still there never was a time in which the faith of the church suffered corruption, or in which the promises of God to his church were not verified, by the richness and plenty of her harvests.

LETTER XII.

HENRY VIII.

SIR,

WE now reach the æra of the Reformation: to you, a subject of great joy; to me, a subject of deep regret. You dedicate your twelfth chapter to its commencement under Henry VIII.

It is one of the misfortunes of controversy, that charges, even of the most serious and offensive kind, may be conveyed in a line, or even by a word, while pages are necessary to refute them. With charges of this nature "the Book of the Church" abounds in a greater degree than any other work which I have met with; they occur in the present chapter more than in any other. All, or even a considerable proportion of them, it is utterly impossible for me to discuss; I am therefore obliged to confine myself to such of your general charges against us, as appear to me to require particular notice.

Has England been benefited by the reformation? This is the subject of the letter which I now have the honour to address you. I shall inquire whether she has gained by it,—I. In temporal happiness;—II. In spiritual wisdom;—III. Or in morals?—IV. Whether the revival of letters was owing to the reformation, or materially promoted by it?—

V. Whether the conduct of the religious orders called for the dissolution of the monasteries?

VI. Whether the church of Rome was negligent in remedying the abuses which crept into it?

VII. And, whether roman-catholic historical writers of the former, or the present times, merit the indiscriminate and unqualified abuse, which, certainly, without any provocation, you pour upon them?

XII. 1.

Has England gained by the Reformation in Temporal Happiness?

TWICE did the roman-catholic religion rescue the inhabitants of England from paganism. She instructed them in the divine truths of the gospel; introduced civilization among them; was, after the Norman Conquest, their only protection against the oppressions of their conqueror; and, during a long subsequent period, their only defence against the tyranny of the barons. To her, you owe your *magna charta*, the important statute *de tallagio non concedendo*, and several other statutes, regulations and forms, which are the groundwork and bulwark of your constitution. A numerous clergy administered the rites and blessings of religion; numerous portions, both of men and women, whose institutes were holy, furnished the young with means of education, the old with comfortable retreats, and all with opportunities of serving God in honour and integrity. Throughout England the roman-

catholic religion only was acknowledged, so that the reformation found the whole nation one flock under one shepherd. Almost every village contained a church, to which the faithful, at stated hours, regularly flocked, for the celebration of the eternal sacrifices, for morning and evening prayer, and for exhortation and instruction. In a multitude of places, the silence of the night was interrupted by pious psalmody. England was covered with edifices raised by the sublimest science, and dedicated to the most noble and most salutary purposes; commerce prospered; agriculture, literature, every useful and ornamental art and science was excellently cultivated, and was in a state of gradual improvement. The monarch was illustrious among the most illustrious potentates of Europe, and held the balance between its preponderating princes; his court was splendid; the treasury overflowed with wealth; there was no debt; and, (one fourth part of the tithes in every place being set apart for the maintenance of the poor*), there was no poor law.

Such was the *temporal prosperity* of England when the reformation arrived. Will it suffer on a comparison of it with the condition of England at any subsequent æra, or even with its present?

* Burn's Justice of Peace, title "Poor," sect. I. r.

XII. 2.

Has England gained by the Reformation in Spiritual Wisdom?

HER great gain, in this respect, is asserted by you in every part of "the Book of the Church:" I shall mention a single fact, then leave yourself to decide on the truth of your own repeated assertion.

From "the Book of the Church," I conclude that you are a sincere believer in the doctrines of the established church of England, as they are expressed in the thirty-nine articles,—the authentic formulary of her faith. You therefore believe all that the roman-catholic church believes respecting the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Divinity of Christ, and the Atonement; but are these doctrines seriously and sincerely believed by the great body of the present English clergy? or by the great body of the present English laity? Do not the former, to use Mr. Gibbon's expression, sign the thirty-nine articles with a sigh, or a smile? Is a sincere and conscientious belief of the doctrines expressed in them, generally considered by the laity to be a condition for salvation?

Indifference to the thirty-nine articles being thus universal, or at least very general, among those who profess themselves members of the established church, must not you, who deem so highly of them, admit that,—as the roman-catholic church believes

all that is said in the thirty-nine articles respecting the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Divinity of Christ, and the Atonement,—there existed when the reformation peered, and all these articles were universally believed, more spiritual wisdom in England than exists in her at this time, with her present scanty creed?

Thus the balance, in respect both to temporal happiness and spiritual wisdom, *now* stands; but if you look at the period between the first introduction of the reformation and its present æra, what years of havoc, what disputed successions of the crown, what wars, what legal murders, what demolitions of magnificent edifices, what destructions of manuscripts, of printed books, of sacred and profane monuments of art; what proscriptions, what confiscations, what calumnies, what imaginary plots, and what other grinding oppressions, in every form, have been often found necessary to extirpate the antient creed, and to introduce and establish the reformation! Surely you will acknowledge that an infinity, both of public and individual misery would have been spared to England, if the reformation had not been carried to the extent to which it was carried:—but,

——"Vicisti! et victos tendere palmas
"Ausonii videre!" VIRGIL.

The reformation, and all that is connected with it, are now established by law; and never have a vanquished people more completely submitted to the conquerors, have conducted themselves with

greater propriety, or received alleviations of their condition with greater gratitude, than the roman-catholics have done: none of his majesty's subjects are more attached to his government. When we think of past grievances, we bless the hands which have removed so many of them; an angry feeling seldom rises, except when, as in "the Book of the Church," we find our religion traduced, and our ancestors vilified in such a manner, that we should deservedly be thought either more or less than men, if we did not exert ourselves to repel the unmerited aggression.

XII. 3.

Was the Reformation attended by a general Improvement in Morals?

THE primitive reformers themselves assert the contrary:—"We see," says Luther, "that, through "the malice of the devil, men are now more avari-"cious, more cruel, more disorderly, more insolent, "and much more wicked, than they were under "popery *."—"If any one wish," says Musculus, "to see a multitude of knaves, disturbers of the "public peace, &c., let him go to a city where the "gospel is preached in its purity," (he means a reformed city); "for it is clearer than the light of "the day, that never were pagans more vicious and "disorderly than those professors of the gospel †." "The thing," says Melancthon, "speaks for itself.

* In Postil. Dom. part 1; Dom. 2, Adv.

† Dom. 1, Adv.

"In this country, among the reformed, their whole "time is devoted to intemperance and drunkenness, "(*immanibus poculis*). So deeply are the people "sunk into barbarity and ignorance, that many of "them would imagine they should die in the night, "if they should chance to fast in the day*." Neither was this growth of vice and ignorance confined to foreign kingdoms. "In this nation," says Stubbs †, after he had made the tour of England, "I found a general decay of good works, or "rather a plain defection or falling away from "God.—For good works, who sees not that they," (the papists of former times), "were far before us, "and we far behind them?"—Erasmus thus describes the fruits of the reformation: he was, indeed, a catholic; but a catholic whom the protestants allow to have been impartial.—He was an eye-witness to the introduction and progress of the reformation; he observed its workings with the eye of a philosopher, and marked them down with the accuracy of a candid and correct historian:—"And who," says he, "are those gospel people? "Look around you, and show me one who has "become a better man;—show me one, who, once "a glutton, is now turned sober;—one, who, be- "fore violent, is now meek;—one, who, before "avaricious, is now generous;—one, who, before "impure, is now chaste. I can point out multi-

* Ad Cap. 6, lat.

† Motives of Good Works, with an Epistle dedicatorie to the Lord Mayor of London, an. 1596.

" tudes, who are become far worse than they were
" before. In their assemblies you never see any of
" them heave a sigh, shed a tear, or strike his
" breast, even on the days that are sacred to afflic-
" tion. Their discourses are little else but calum-
" nies against the priesthood.—They have abolished
" confession; and few of them confess their sins
" even to God.—They have abrogated fasting, and
" they wallow in sensuality.—They have become
" epicureans, for fear of being Jews.—They have
" cast off the yoke of human institutions, and along
" with it, they have shaken off the yoke of the
" Lord. So far from being submissive to bishops,
" they are disobedient to the civil magistrates.
" What tumults and seditions mark their conduct!
" For what trifles do they fly to arms! St. Paul
" commanded the first christians to shun the society
" of the wicked; and, behold! the reformers seek
" most the society of the most corrupted; these are
" their delight. The gospel now flourishes, for-
" sooth, because priests and monks take wives in
" opposition to human laws, and in despite of their
" sacred vows. Own it; it is folly to exchange
" evils for evils, and madness to exchange small
" evils for great ones."—" Indeed," says Melancthon*, weeping while he says it, " speaking
" modestly, any other state of things, in any other
" age, exhibits the beauty of an age of gold, when
" it is compared to the confusion which the re-
" formers introduced.".

* Ep. lib. iv.

Capito*, a great partizan of Luther, and much connected with Bucer, writes thus to Farell, a leader among the calvinists, "As they have wholly deprived the clergy of credit, it is natural that all should change for the worse. There is no longer any order in the communities. I acknowledge the great evils which we have occasioned in the church, by rejecting, with so much imprudence and precipitation, the authority of the pope. The people is now without bridle or curb, and despises all authority; as if, by abolishing the papacy, we had suppressed, in the same manner, the power of the servants of the church, and the efficacy of the sacraments! Every one now exclaims,—"I have enough to guide myself! As I have the gospel to lead me to the discovery of Jesus Christ and his doctrines, what need I of other help?"—"All the waters of the Elbe," Melancthon† writes to one of his correspondents, "would not give me sufficient tears to bewail the miseries of the reformation. The people will never submit to the yoke, which the love of liberty had made them throw off. Our partizans fight, not for the gospel, but ascendancy. Ecclesiastical discipline no longer exists. Doubts are entertained on the most important subjects: the evil is incurable."

Bishop Burnet‡ gives the following view of the state of morality in England, in the reign of

* Epist. ad Farell, int. Calv. p. 5.

† Melancth. Ep. l. iv; Ep. 100—129.

‡ History of the Reformation, part 2, p. 226.

Edward VI.:—" The sins of England did, at that " time, call down from heaven heavy curses. They " are sadly expressed in a discourse that Ridley " wrote after, under the title *Of the Lamentation* " *of England*: he says, that 'lechery, oppression, " pride, covetousness, and a hatred and scorn of " all religion, were generally spread among all " people; but chiefly those of higher rank.' "— " Lechery," says Latimer, "is used in England, " and such lechery, as is used in no other part of " the world. And it is made a matter of sport, " a trifle, not to be passed on or reformed."— I might cite passages equally strong upon the state of morals in the reign of queen Elizabeth, both from Strype*, a zealous advocate for the reformation, and Camden, the queen's historiographer; but I have no pleasure in describing such scenes, and nothing short of your strong abuse, and, I must say, misrepresentation of the religion and morals of catholics in catholic times, would have induced me to transcribe the preceding passages.—With one question more, however, I beg leave to trouble you.

You are undoubtedly acquainted with the following strange passages in different works of Luther: he first describes his conduct and feelings, while he remained within the pale of the catholic religion, and observed the rules of his order:—" When " I lived in my monastery, I punished my body " with watching, fasting and prayer; I observed

* Strype's Mem. Eccl. book ii, c. 23.

" my vows of chastity, poverty and obedience. " Whatsoever I did, it was with singleness of heart; " with good zeal, and for the glory of God, &c. " I feared grievously the last day, and was, from " the bottom of my heart, desirous of being saved*." Here, he presents us with a picture at once amiable and respectable; and, as there is no reason to suppose that Luther excelled, in piety, the generality of his companions, it may be considered a fair representation of the general character of the members of religious orders when the reformation broke out.

Now hear the description, which he gives of himself, after he had commenced reformer:—" I am " burnt," he said, " with the flames of my untamed " flesh; I am mad almost with the rage of lust, " and the desire of women. I, who ought to be " fervent in spirit, am fervent in impurity, in sloth, " &c.† Relying on the strong foundation of my " learning, I yield not, in pride, either to the em- " peror, prince or devil; no, not to the universe " itself‡."

You also know the strange poetical effusion of *Beza*,—

" Abest Candida,—Beza quid moraris!"

Now, in all the legends, in all the other monkeries,

* Ad Gal.

† In Col. Mens.

‡ Resp. ad Maled. Regni Angliæ.—I transcribe doctor Fletcher's translation of these three passages. Sermons, vol. 2, p. 116, 117.

—I use your own words,—which you have so strongly vituperated, is there even one so scandalous, or so likely to corrupt the morals of its readers, as these passages in the works of the acknowledged patriarchs of your church?

XII. 4.

Was the Revival of Letters owing to the Reformation, or materially forwarded by it?

THE great advances which were made in every branch of literature, both on the Continent and in England, previously to the reformation, are kept in the background by yourself, and most other writers against the roman-catholic religion, so that the generality of readers think, that the revival of polite literature *was entirely owing to the reformers*; but justice should be done to our catholic ancestors.

Before the first dawn of the reformation, literature, the sciences, and the arts, had found munificent protectors in Nicholas V. Sixtus IV. and more than one Medicean pope; in Besarion, Lionel and Borsus, at Ferrara; in the Viscontis, the Sforsias, and Lewis Morus, at Milan; in the dukes of Urbino; in Alphonsus of Arragon, at Naples; in Mathias Corvinus, in Hungary; in Charles VII. Lewis XII. and Francis I. in France; in James IV. of Scotland; and Henry VIII. of England. Before the end of the fifteenth century, the presses had been worked in thirty-four towns in France; Nicholas V. had founded the library of the Vatican; Besarion had given his mag-

nificent collection to Venice; and the old and the young had crowded to the Greek school of Emanuel Chrysoloras*. You are not unacquainted with the many ladies, who, in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, were illustrious for learning and science; you know that some of them even filled chairs of professors in the universities of Italy. During the same centuries, literature flourished so much in Germany, that the celebrated Reuchlin was accustomed to say, that "Greece had tra-"versed the Alps, and settled among his country-"men." Between the years 1403 and 1506, more than ten universities had been founded on German soil; and improved courses of literature had been established in Deventer, Kempten, Alkmaar, Munster, Heidleberg, Worms, and various other Teutonic towns. Between the years 1455 and 1536, more than 22,932,000 volumes had issued from various presses †; and, long before the name of Luther was heard, Cimabue, the father of the modern school of painting, had produced noble specimens of his art; Brunelleschi had revived, at Florence, the forms of antient architecture; and Dante had produced his *Divinia Comedia*.

Survey the long line of towns in Belgium; those which adorn Lombardy; the many public edifices of magnificent and costly architecture, with which they

* See the Recherches sur les Bibliothèques, p. 82. 207. 233, and A. H. L. Heeren's Geschichte der Kunste und der Wissenschaften, seit der Wiederherstellung derselben.

† Recherches sur les Bibliothèques, p. 180.

are filled; the works in marble, gold, silver, iron and bronze, with which they are ornamented; — how much of these were anterior to Luther!

In England, Roger Bacon had meditated, and Chaucer had sung. Erasmus informs us, that "learning triumphed in England, and that the "king and the queen, two cardinals, and almost "all the bishops, exerted themselves in promoting "and encouraging it." He mentions, "as emi- "nently learned, Linacre, the king's physician; "Cuthbert Trunstal, master of the rolls; Sir "Thomas Moore, of the privy council; Pace, se- "cretary of state; William Mountjoy, the queen's "chamberlain; John Colet, preacher to their ma- "jesties;" and "as yet," says Erasmus, "I have "only mentioned the chief. The court abounds "with such eminent men, that it seems a seat of "the muses, and may vie with any school of philo- "sophy, with Athens itself*." All this was ante- rior to the reformation. I beg leave to add, that Mary of England, Elizabeth, Mary of Scotland, Lady Jane Grey, and the three ladies Seymour, all of whom are celebrated for their learning and ac- complishments, received their literary educations in catholic England. How many of the Elizabethan prelates, whose learning you *extol*, received their education under roman-catholic masters? Then, can it be denied, that the reformation found litera- ture, science and art, diffused over all the southern,

* Ad Petrum Bembum, Basileæ, an. 1518.

and most of the northern territories of Europe? or that it was then in a very advanced state of cultivation? or that the ardour of the public, for instruction, was very high? or that there was a very strong and very general desire for instruction and improvement?

Surely the progress of it was rather retarded than promoted by the theological disputes, the animosities, the contentions, and the wars, which were occasioned by the reformation.

It is observable, that "Luther and Melancthon," to use the words of Mosheim *, "seemed to set "out with a resolution to banish every species of "philosophy from the church." Luther wished that the works of Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, and the other ancient classics, should be consigned to the flames †. Stock, his disciple, opposed the teaching of the alphabet, lest the distractions, which study occasions, should withhold the mind from God ‡: on this principle, he founded a sect called Abecedarians. "At Strasburg," says Erasmus, in a letter to Melancthon §, "it is publicly taught, that no "science should be cultivated, and that no language, "except Hebrew, should be taught." I see no reason to suppose, that Luther changed the opinion expressed in the passage which I have cited; Melancthon certainly did, and published his *Loci*

* Cent. xvi. c. 1, s. 10.
† Ep. ad Nob. Germ. an. 1520.
‡ Osiander, Cent. xvi. E. 2.
§ Ep. 71.—ad Melancthon.

Communes, a philosophical work, greatly esteemed. From this time, letters were generally cultivated by the reformers, and they deserved highly of literature; still, you must admit that the first advances were made by roman-catholics, and that the revival of letters was originally, if not principally, owing to them.

You will probably expect, that I should say something on the subject of the Biblical studies of the roman-catholics before the period of the reformation. I trust that you will agree with me, that, taking the circumstances of the times into consideration, they were pursued both with ardour and success. On this head, I beg leave to refer you to the second part of doctor Hody's "Scholastic History of the Text and Versions of the Greek and "Latin Vulgate:" you will find it proves, beyond controversy, that there never was a time, even in the darkest ages, in which the study of the scriptures, in their original languages, was not cultivated and encouraged by the roman-catholic clergy. The works of the venerable Bede, of Grossetête, the bishop of Lincoln, and Roger Bacon, show how much they were encouraged in this country. No sooner was the typographic art discovered, than the catholic presses were employed in printing, in every size, from the folio to the twenty-fourth, editions of the Old and New Testament. The labours of Lanfranc, whom you so much and so deservedly praise, in procuring correct copies both of the Old and New Testament, are mentioned by Baronius,

Cave, Dupin, and Wetstein. Every roman-catholic acknowledges, with readiness, the transcendent merit of the London Polyglot; but it was preceded by those of Complutum, Antwerp, and Paris. Will it be too much to require, of candid protestants, to admit, that without these, the London Polyglot would not have existed? The Complutensian Polyglot was begun in 1502, and the whole printed in 1517, long before the first dawn of the reformation.

You mention the translations of the Bible into English in terms, which must lead your readers to suppose, that the roman-catholic church discourages translations of it into vernacular languages. How very often, and how very erroneously, has this been charged upon the catholics! If you will do your present correspondent the favour, to look into his "Essay on the Discipline of the Church of Rome, "respecting the general perusal of the Scriptures "in the vulgar Tongue, by the Laity *," you will find, that several translations into the German, several into the French, several into the Italian, and several into the Belgic tongue, had been printed, before publications of protestant versions in those languages appeared. I beg leave to add, that, at the revocation of the edict of Nantes, 50,000 copies

* Butler's works, vol. 4, essay ii, p. 191. In the "*Garden "of the Soul,*" the most popular catholic prayer-book, a new edition of which, with the formal approbation of doctor Poynter, has been recently published, roman-catholics are recommended, (p. 203), "before they go to bed, to read *a chapter in the scripture*, or some spiritual book."

of a French translation of the New Testament, were, at the recommendation of Bossuet, distributed among the converted protestants, by the order of Louis XIV *. Several years ago, I was furnished, by an English bookseller, with a list of twenty-three editions of the roman-catholic translation of the New, or of both the Old and New Testament; and many have been printed since that time. For several years past, the roman-catholics have been censured, with great severity, for not encouraging, to the extent recommended, the promiscuous reading of the English Bible, by the laity, without note or comment. Are we not entitled to our opinion upon it? Has not experience justified our caution? Have not several eminent lights, of the protestant church, always condemned, do not several of them now condemn it? Have not many of the most respectable advocates, for the general distribution of Bibles, now declared a different opinion?

XII. 5.

Whether the Conduct of the religious Orders justified the Dissolution of the Monasteries?

A PERSON, who would publish a true and full account of this important event, and state candidly in it, the advantages and disadvantages which, at the æra of the reformation, attended monastic

* Vie de Bossuet, evêque de Meaux, par le cardinal de Bausset, ed. 1814, tome iv. p. 83.

establishments, would deserve well of the literary world. To the best of my power, I have attempted to do it in my "Historical Memoirs of the English, "Scottish, and Irish Roman-catholics;" and you will oblige me by perusing what I have written in that work upon this subject.

In a preceding letter, I have inserted the encomiastic account given of monasteries by M. Mallêt, an intelligent and candid protestant. I shall now transcribe what is said of them, by an abler writer, not unknown to yourself*.

"The world has never been so deeply indebted "to any body of men, as to this illustrious order; "but historians, when relating the evil of which "they are the occasion, have forgotten the good "which they produced. Even the commonest "readers are familiar with the history of that arch "miracle-monger St. Dunstan; whilst the most "learned of our countrymen scarce remember the "names of those admirable men, who went forth "from England, and became the apostles of the "North. Tinian and Juan Fernandez are not "more beautiful spots on the ocean, than Malms-"bury, and Lendisfarne, and Jarrow, in the ages "of our heptarchy. A community of pious men, "devoted to literature, and to the useful arts, as "well as to religion, seems, in those ages, like a "green oasis amid the desert; like stars in a moon-"less night, they shine upon us with a tranquil

* Quarterly Review for December 1811.

" ray. If ever there was a man who could truly " be called venerable, it was he to whom that ap- " pellation is constantly fixed, Bede, whose life " was past in instructing his own generation, and " preparing records for posterity. In those days " the church offered the only asylum from the " evils to which every country was exposed: amidst " continual wars the church enjoyed peace; it was " regarded as a sacred realm by men, who, though " they hated each other, believed and feared the " same God. Abused as it was, by the worldly- " minded and ambitious, and disgraced by the " artifices of the designing, and the follies of the " fanatic, it afforded a shelter to those who were " better than the world in their youth, or weary of " it in their age: the wise, as well as the timid and " the gentle, fled to this Goshen of God, which en- " joyed its own light and calm, amid darkness and " storms."

After perusing this splendid tribute, evidently given by no mean hand, to the useful and the edifying habits of the inhabitants of the monasteries, it is difficult to believe, that the lives of a great proportion of them were so scandalous, or even so useless, as to justify a total suppression of them.

The best account of this extraordinary event, which has come to my hands, is given in " Collier's " Ecclesiastical History." He sheds a generous tear over the sufferers; and, while he admits the criminality of some individuals, and the disorders

of some houses, he honourably and successfully advocates the general integrity of the body.

In my opinion, the report of the commissioners, employed in the visitation of the monasteries, is wholly unworthy of credit. We see how little attention to truth, and how great a violation, both of the substance and forms of justice, were shown, even in the proceedings in parliament, and in the highest courts of justice, against the most exalted and most distinguished personages, whom the king wished to oppress, and whom all, except the king, wished to preserve. How much less, then, must necessarily have been the attention paid, either to truth or justice, when monks and nuns were to be persecuted? where obscure individuals were appointed to report upon their conduct? where the king was determinately bent upon their ruin? where his courtiers were indifferent to their fate? and where plunder of them was the general aim and immediate expectation of many, and the sanguine hope of almost all?

XII. 6.

Alleged Negligence of the Church of Rome, in remedying Ecclesiastical Abuses.

You remark, that "much might have been done "by the timely removal of abuses, so gross, that "the romanists of the present age are reduced, in "the face of notorious facts, to deny what they find "it impossible to defend."

Do we really deserve this abusive language? In the passage which I translated, in a former page, from Bossuet, are the abuses in the church denied? Are they even palliated? Is not this passage alone, particularly if we take into account the documents which it cites, and, therefore, incorporates, a complete refutation of the most contumelious charge, which you, in this place, bring against us? In the fifth of his excellent letters to doctor Sturges, doctor Milner expressly acknowledges "the increasing spirit of irreligion and immorality among different nations, and in none more "than our own, during a considerable time pre-"vious to the reformation." Are not these as full confessions of the abuses in the church, as you can require? We believe that they were not so extensive, or so enormous, as you represent them. We think your description of them a hideous caricature; but their existence, to a great and lamentable height and extent, we never deny. If you look into Mr. Alban Butler's "Lives of the Saints," one of the most popular works which have issued from the roman-catholic press, you will scarcely find in it the life of any saint, who flourished during the middle ages, in which, on the one hand, the then existing disorders, and, on the other, his exertions to remove them, are not mentioned.

Thus, contrary to your strong accusation, do our writers acknowledge the existence of abuses in our own church. But why are you silent on the unceasing efforts of the roman-catholic church to remedy them?

In 789, the council of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 813, the council of Châlons, proscribed the abuses in pilgrimages. In 1215, the council of Lataran, in 1274, the council of Lyons, came to resolutions against the multiplication of religious orders. In the last of these councils, and in that of Constance, much was said against the prodigality, with which indulgences were then distributed. Are you ignorant of the resolutions taken at the councils of Constance and Basil, against the abuses of papal power? Æneas Silvius, afterwards pope Pius II. informs us, that "the doctrine held in those councils was that of the "greater number of catholic divines, of the lights "of the church, of the doctors of truth, and of "most of the universities and schools in Christen-"dom*".

Hincmar, archbishop of Rheims, and cardinal Cusa, publicly called into question the authenticity of the decretals. Look into the histories of the pontificates of Leo IV, Leo IX, Gregory VII, Innocent III, Urban V, you will find abundant proof of the exertions of the popes, to preserve both integrity of faith and purity of morals in every part of Christendom, and to propagate christianity in the remotest regions of the earth. Open your own Wilkins; see what was done by the English roman-catholic clergy, during the middle ages, to promote the honour of God and the welfare of man. "Gre-"gory VII, Alexander III, Innocent IV," says

* Comment. Pii II. p. m. 15.

Muller, a protestant writer of celebrity, "arrested "the torrent of immorality which was then swallow- "ing up the world. . . . . If the hierarchy had been "removed, Europe would have been deprived of an "order of men, which, (although it were for their "own interest only), has always had its eyes upon the "public welfare. An asylum against the wrath of "kings was found in the altar; an asylum against "the abuse of ecclesiastical power was found in the "throne, and the public good resulted from the "balance." Why then have you dwelt so little on the edifying parts of the history of the roman-catholic church, and so much on its misfortunes? What should you think of a painter, who, professing to give a view of the Alps, should keep its magnificent scenery wholly in the background, and bring nothing prominently in sight, but the few stagnant marshes which deform it?

XII. 7.

Doctor Southey's Abuse of former and present Catholic Historical Writers.

You say little on the subject of the divorce; but, when you mention the execution of Anne Boleyn, you tell us, that "the romanists were, in that age, "so accustomed to falsehood, that they could not "abstain from it, even when truth might have "served their cause. With characteristic effrontery, "they asserted, that her mother and her sister had

"both been mistresses of the king, and that she "was his own daughter.

"In this spirit the histories of our reformation "were composed, till they perceived that such "coarse calumnies could no longer be palmed "upon the world, and then they past into an in- "sidious strain, little less malicious, and not more "faithful."

Henry's connexion with the mother of Anne Boleyn is rejected by doctor Lingard; but the connexion between Henry and Mary, the sister of the unfortunate Anne, admits of no doubt. The monarch's connexion with the mother of Anne is problematical: the argument for it rests principally on the strong assertion of Saunders, and the inferences to be drawn, from the marked care and attention which the monarch constantly bestowed on Anne, from the time of her birth; from the expensive education, and the splendid establishment which she received from him, and for which no other reason can be assigned. Burnet replied to Saunders; le Grand to Burnet; and le Grand's arguments are powerful. But crimes should never be believed without strong, and seldom without positive evidence. This, in the present case, appears to be wholly wanting; and cardinal Pole's total silence upon the charge, in his acrimonious invectives against Henry, is favourable to the monarch. I do not believe the tale: but I cannot think that the historians who asserted it deserve the epithet of "fiendish malignity," which you bestow upon them. If they deserve it, what epithet do those deserve,

who, in the days of James II, invented or propagated the story of the warming-pan?

I know of no catholic writer who deserves the strong expressions which, in the passage I have cited from your work, you have applied, without any exception, to all our former and all our present historians of the reformation. You know the great and deserved celebrity of "Doctor Milner's Letters to "Doctor Sturges;" the greatest part of them is of an historical nature; and there never has been a more powerful attack on the characters of the persons, by whom the reformation was primitively established and supported, than in this work. It appeared in 1800; and thus it has been twenty-four years before the public: seven editions of it have been published,

Can you point out in it one instance of that "falsehood," that "coarse calumny," those "insi-"dious strains," that "characteristic effrontery," that "malice," that "insidiousness," or that "faith-"lessness," with which you charge our historians in the sentence which I have transcribed from your work.

You probably are acquainted with doctor Milner's "End of Controversy," published in 1818, and now in its third edition; the ablest exposition of the doctrines of the roman-catholic church, on the articles contested with her by protestants; and the ablest statement of the proofs by which they are supported, and of the historical facts with which they are connected, that has appeared in our language. You probably have heard of the "Reply

" to it," published by the reverend Richard Grier, vicar of Templebodane, in Ireland, and of doctor Milner's " Vindication," published in 1822. Can you point out in " the End of Controversy," or the " Vindication of it," even a single passage, to which even one of the opprobrious expressions in your work can be justly applied? or can you point out a single passage objected to by Mr. Grier, in which doctor Milner has not triumphantly refuted him?

Doctor Lingard's history is evidently not unknown to you. Does he not appear, in every part of it, to have consulted original writers and documents? Does he not uniformly express himself in the most explicit terms? Does he not regularly mention the dates of every occurrence related by him? Does he not constantly cite the authorities upon which his relations are founded? Is not his language uniformly temperate? Yet, in the unqualified generality of your opprobrious words, is his excellent history included!

One passage in it you particularly advert to: " It is fit," you say*, " that the reader should " know in what manner the recent catholic histo- " rian, doctor Lingard, speaks of lord Cobham's " trial, before the convocation, at which Arundel, " the archbishop of Canterbury, presided; he says, " that 'Lord Cobham's conduct was as arrogant and " insulting, as that of his judge was mild and dig- " nified.' It is fitting, indeed, that we should

* Vol 1. p. 391, note.

"know in what manner an English catholic histo-
"rian speaks of such transactions *in these times.*"
—We cannot think the three last words of this sentence,—you yourself print them in italics,—are used with good-natured intentions towards us.

The best account of what passed at lord Cobham's trial, is given in the Acts of the Convocation, published by Wilkins*. If I could place the volume and the pages before my readers, I should be satisfied and silent: as every person, who perused them, would acknowledge the accuracy of doctor Lingard's representation. No insulting, no harsh expression, was uttered by the archbishop; his addresses to lord Cobham were uniformly decorous, dignified, and mild. He adjourned the court for four days, to give lord Cobham time for reflection and defence. Was any thing like this humanity exhibited on the trials of the innocent catholics, in the reigns of queen Elizabeth and her three protestant successors?

Lord Cobham had three times refused to obey the process of the court requiring his appearance; he had fortified his castle to prevent its being served upon him; and, ultimately, he was apprehended by force. When, at length, he was produced in court, he declined giving explicit answers on the points on which he was interrogated: "I "believe," he said, "all that my Lord God would "I should believe."—"Such faith," you remark, "was not sufficient, under the papal tyranny, to

* Concilia, vol. 3. p. 353—357.

" save him from the flames." Was it sufficient to save from the rack or gibbet the catholic sufferers in this kingdom for their religion in any protestant reign? Would it have saved the anabaptists, who suffered in the reign of Elizabeth? or the arians, who suffered in the reign of James? Would it have satisfied any of the judges, who lately tried the Carlisles? or the magistrates, who lately committed Hale? Lord Cobham repeatedly denied the jurisdiction of the court who tried him; compared his judges to the Pharisees, to Ananias, to Caiphas: he told them, that " Rome was the very nest of " antichrist; and that out of that nest came all the " disciples of him, of whom prelates, priests, and " monks were the body, and the piled friars the " tail. Your possessions and lordships," he told the archbishop, " are venom, shed by Judas unto the " church:—ye never followed Christ." Can you say, that this language was not arrogant, or not insulting? —I use your own translation of it.

I trust that this, though a succinct, will be found a true representation of what past between the archbishop and lord Cobham. I now ask, whether, if a person should, at this time, conduct himself in any spiritual or temporal court, in the same manner as lord Cobham did in the court of convocation, before archbishop Arundel, he would not be punished? Yet you laud lord Cobham's conduct throughout.

You then inform us, that the court " excom- " municated lord Cobham, and pronounced him

" *accursed*; and not him alone, but all who should " in anyway receive, help, or defend him." The word *accursed*, is your own addition: no such word was used by the court. You call it a " cruel and " inhuman" sentence: how many sentences equally cruel and inhuman have been passed by protestant courts on catholics, not only less culpable than lord Cobham, but perfectly innocent of the crimes of which they were accused? and their innocence of which is now acknowledged?

In a former part of your work, you transcribe the terrible words in which excommunication was expressed: you observe, that no form of heathen " superstition could have been so revolting, as when " a christian minister called upon the Redeemer of " Mankind to fulfil execrations which the devil " himself might seem to have inspired." I do not defend the words to which you object; they were devised in an age of barbarism, when the most forcible language only had any effect on the populace: they were an abusive application of the curses in Deuteronomy*; and, I believe, they were resorted to only on singular occasions, and that, before the revival of letters, they had fallen into desuetude. By perusing the document in Wilkins, to which I have referred, you will observe, that the sentence of excommunication, past by archbishop Arundel on lord Cobham, does not contain these execrations.—According to the actual jurisprudence of

* Deut. c. xxxviii.

England, excommunication is yet attended by many civil penalties and disabilities.

All who peruse your account of lord Cobham, and your censure of doctor Lingard, should recollect that, in an earlier part of "the Book of the "Church," you inform us, that "the Lollards held "principles incompatible with the peace of society; "opinions founded in gross error, and leading to "direct and enormous evil;" and that "lord "Cobham was confessedly their head and leader." I trust I have successfully vindicated doctor Lingard against the only particular charge you have brought against him.

"Historical Memoirs of the English, Irish, "and Scottish Catholics," have been published by another hand: you may, perhaps, find some things in them which you think objectionable; but I feel a strong confidence, that they do not merit any of the undistinguishing and unqualified expressions of gross abuse, which you apply to the historical productions of every catholic historian of the reformation.

You close the chapter, by an insinuation in favour of Henry VIII. You intimate, that "he was not "the mere monster which, upon a cursory view, he "must needs appear to every young and ingenuous "mind:" yet you mention, in the preceding line, "his many revolting acts of caprice and cruelty;" and, in a subsequent line, "his sending a wife and "a minister to the scaffold with as little compunc- "tion, as he would have in sending a dog to be "drowned."

The frequent repetition of these enormities, in every part of his reign; his general profligacy; his prodigality; his wicked interferences with the courts of justice; his unjust and ruinous wars; and his general oppression of his people, are confessed by all his historians: all represent him,—to use the language of one of the most eminent among them,—as a tyrant, "who never spared woman in his lust, "nor man in his wrath; so that, if all the patterns "of a merciless prince had been lost in the world, "they might have been found in this king*." Such is the character given, even by his protestant historians, of Henry; if it be true, it justifies your expression,—he was not a mere monster, he was more: I wish you to mention the vices which he did not possess; or the talents which he possessed, and did not abuse.

Cromwell, his active minister, particularly in his rejection of the pope's supremacy, and the dissolution of the monasteries, you highly extol: but you omit to mention that he died in the roman-catholic faith; and that, from the scaffold, he solemnly professed, and called on the spectators "to bear him "record, that he died in the catholic faith, not "doubting in any article of his faith."

* Heylin's Hist. p. 15; he citing Sir Walter Raleigh.

LETTER XIII.

EDWARD VI.

SIR,

IT gives me pleasure to mention, that your account of the suppression of the remaining colleges, and the hospitals, and chantries, and of the general destruction of their libraries, and the sacred and secular articles of use and ornament belonging to them, in the reign of Edward VI. is free from objection, and written with equal accuracy and eloquence. A catholic, however, may be permitted to wish, that you had given in it some account of the enormous wickedness of the protector Somerset, and of Dudley earl of Warwick, who supplanted him. Under the influence of these daring noblemen, Cranmer devised the first sanguinary code that was framed against the English catholics. Now the bad character of the persecutor is universally considered to be favourable to the persecuted: on this account, it has, you well know, been deemed honourable to christianity, that Nero was its first persecutor; justice, therefore, to the catholics seems to require, that it should be known who the persons were by whom they were first persecuted.

You might also have noticed the opinion of Cranmer, that the exercise of episcopal jurisdiction depends upon the prince; that, in conformity to this principle, he thought his own right to exercise

episcopal authority had ended with the life of Henry VIII.; that he would not act as archbishop, until the infant monarch had renewed his commission; that his example was imitated by other prelates; and that this proceeding was as inconsistent with the doctrine of the church of England, expressed in the thirty-nine articles, as it is with the doctrine and discipline of the roman-catholic church.

You might, too, have mentioned Cranmer's alienation of the better half of the possessions of the see of Canterbury to the king. Read the article in Collier's "Appendix to the second volume of his "history," in which he gives "an account of the "church lands alienated by the prelates, from their "sees, in the reign of Henry VIII." You will find in it what Cranmer did, and how his example was imitated by Ridley and other prelates. So great a friend as you profess yourself to the dignity and comfort of the English hierarchy, you may, perhaps, feel a wish, that, on this occasion, Cranmer and his imitators had shown something of the stern and uncompromising spirit of Becket.

You might too, and, in justice to the roman-catholics you ought, to have noticed their patience during the innovations in the reign of Edward VI. and the miseries which attended them. It is difficult to find, in history, an instance of more general or galling spoliation and oppression than those which the roman-catholics then suffered. You admit, that "the majority of the nation was, at this "time, attached to the old faith;" the government

was distracted, and the mind of the public was generally alienated from it. Thus the roman-catholics, if it had been their principle to propagate their religion, or even to ward off its impending ruin, by violence, might have easily established their ascendency; but this is neither their doctrine nor their practice,—the roman-catholics, therefore, remained in peace. Such a remark, *at the present time**,—if you had made it,—would not have been lost upon us; we should have gratefully received it. With this feeling, we read your candid acknowledgment, that the insurrection, in Edward's reign, was "a conflict, not between the adherents of the old "religion and of the new, but between men who "fought for plunder, and those whose property "was at stake."

The subject now calls me to return to the charges of ignorance and corruption with which you so often, and so contumeliously, upbraid our church. Here, let me request you to consider the proceedings, so highly injurious to sacred and profane learning of every kind, which attended the introduction of the new religion in the reign of Henry VIII. and its progress during that of the infant Edward, whom you so highly celebrate; and to compare them with those which attended the rise and progress of the catholic religion in this country. You recollect the expression, as just as it is beautiful, of Collier, which I have already cited,—that, on the introduction of

* See the italic words in "the Book of the Church," vol. 1. p. 379.—*At this time*, the British roman-catholics are petitioning for emancipation.

catholic faith into England, "every thing seemed "brightened, as if nature had been melted down "and recoined." In proportion as the catholic faith advanced, humanity, civilization, the arts and the sciences, advanced with her, and were equally encouraged by the monarch, the pastors, and their flocks. I request you, (always bearing in mind that printing was then unknown), to say, whether, in your opinion, these advances in useful and ornamental knowledge, and this encouragement of them, were not greater than the most sanguine hopes could have expected? All were extinguished by the Danish invasion; but no sooner was the Norman government settled, than all the useful and ornamental literature revived: the dominions of Henry II. became, if the expression may be allowed, the Athens of the feudal territories; and, notwithstanding the long years of havoc, which urged their destined way during the contests between the house of York and the house of Lancaster, arts, sciences and literature, were constantly on the increase. Compare this with the Vandal scenes which began in the reign of Henry, and were consummated in the reign of his son. "I judge it to be true," says the most anti-catholic Bale *, "and "I utter it with heaviness, that neither the Britons "under the Romans and Saxons, nor yet the "English people under the Danes and Normans, "had ever such damage of their learned monu- "ments, as we have at this our time. Our pos-

* Declaration upon Leland's Journal, ann. 1549; Fuller's Church History, book vi. 333.

" terity may well curse the wicked fall of our age;
" this unreasonable sport of England's most noble
" antiquities."

Can it then be honourably said, that the rise and first progress of the new religion in this country, were as edifying or as salutary as the rise and first progress of the catholic religion had been?

But the catholic religion had superstitions and corruptions:—this is your constant theme. That, during the legal establishment of the catholic religion, there were some superstitions and some corrupt practices, I admit; and I have shown, that this has been admitted by our best roman-catholic writers, though all deny that either superstition or corruption existed in the extent you describe.—Admitting, however, for the sake of argument, that both existed in the very extent described by you,—I have no fear of closing with you even on this ground.—Permit me to ask you, whom I suppose to be a protestant of the thirty-nine articles, a single question: Which is the greatest obstacle to the rise, the progress, or the revival of religion,—superstition and corruption, or laxity of creed and indifference? I leave you to answer this question, and to draw the inference.

Believe me, Sir, the time is come, when it is for the interests of all protestants and all catholics, who sincerely wish well to their respective religions, to abstain from contention, and to unite in the defence of their common christianity. All my writings, such as they are, have at least the merit of inculcating this salutary truth.

LETTER XIV.

QUEEN MARY.

SIR,

I HAVE now to consider the chapter in "the "Book of the Church," which relates to the reign of Queen Mary. Permit me to offer you some observations, I. On her persecutions of the protestants: II. On archbishop Cranmer and bishop Latimer: III. And the queen's general character.

XIV. 1.

Persecutions of the Protestants in the Reign of Queen Mary.

IN your account of the burning of Joan Bocher, in the reign of Edward VI. you mention, that the active part which Cranmer took in it is the *saddest* page in his history; the only one which admits of no excuse. Permit me to introduce the subject of this letter by asking—what excuse you can suggest for the provision for the persecution of the roman-catholics, which Cranmer inserted in his "Code "for the Reformation of the Ecclesiastical Laws of "England*?" By this, a belief of transubstantiation, of the supremacy of the pope, or of justification by faith only, was made heresy; and it was

* Under the title "de Hæresibus," c. 1. 7. 19. 21; and, "de Judiciis contra hæc," c. 1. 1, 2, 3, 4.

ordained, that individuals, accused of holding any such heretical opinions, should be arraigned before the spiritual courts; should, on conviction, be there excommunicated; and, after a respite of sixteen days, should, if they continued obstinate, be delivered to the civil magistrate, to suffer the punishment provided by law. Is it possible to allege any thing in extenuation of these provisions?

In extenuation of Mary's persecutions, it may be said, that she did no more than execute, against Cranmer and his associates, the provisions to which he had wished her and her associates to be exposed; so that the flames, in which he was consumed, were those in which he himself had burned the anabaptists, and sought to burn the catholics. It may also be suggested, that Cranmer's sanguinary scheme had not been provoked by any misconduct or intemperance of the catholics; but that the provocations which the protestants had given to Mary, were numerous and irritating. "They heaped," says doctor Lingard, "on the queen, her bishops, "and her religion, every irritating epithet which "language could supply. Her clergy could not "exercise their functions without danger to their "lives: a dagger was thrown at one priest in the "pulpit; a gun was discharged at another; and "several wounds were inflicted on a third, while he "administered the communion in his church. The "chief supporters of the treason of Northumber-"land, the most active among the adherents of "Wyat, professed the reformed creed: an im-

" postor was suborned to personate Edward VI.; " a pretended spirit published denunciations against " the queen, from a hole in a wall; some congre- " gations prayed for her death; tracts, filled with " libellous and treasonable matter, were transmitted " from the exiles in Germany*; and successive insur- " rections were planned by the fugitives in France." —" When public prayers," says Mr. Phillips in his Life of Cardinal Pole, " were ordered, on the sup- " position of the queen's pregnancy, a reformed " preacher made use of the form,—' that it would " please God, either to turn her heart from idolatry, " or shorten her days.' A dog's head was shaved " in contempt of the clerical tonsure; and, by an " impiety, which," says Mr. Phillips, " I have " difficulty to repeat, a wafer was put into a dead " cat's paw, in derision of the holy sacrament, and " hung up at Cheapside."

That these were great provocations, you must admit: You must also admit, that no such provocations were given by the roman-catholics, either on the accession of Edward, or the accession of Elizabeth. Do the persecutions which I have mentioned justify Mary's persecutions? By no means: I think they would have justified measures of precaution; but, between wise measures of precaution and persecution, the space is immense. You say

* If scurrility and calumny form the merit of a libel, it will be difficult to find anything to equal these publications. The reader will meet with some samples in Strype, iii. 251, 252. 328. 358. 410. 460.

much in praise of the sanctity of the martyrs in Mary's reign: "I have," says doctor Milner, in his twenty-second letter in his "End of Contro-" versy," "discussed this matter at some length in " 'the Letters to a Prebendary;' and have shown, " in opposition to John Fox and his copyists, that " some of these pretended martyrs were alive when " he wrote the history of their deaths *; that others " of them, and the five bishops in particular, so " far from being saints, were notoriously deficient " in the duties of subjects and honest men †; that " others again were notorious assassins, as Gardener, " Flower, and Rough; or robbers, as Debenham, " King, Marsh, Cauchis, Gilbert, Massey, &c. ‡; " while not a few of them retracted their errors, as " Bilney, Taylor, Wassalia, and died, to all appear-" ance, catholics."

There appears to be reason to think, that Mary's bishops, in general, did not promote the persecution. Little blame seems imputable to cardinal Pole, or bishop Tunstal; more is chargeable on Gardiner, the bishop of Winchester and chancellor; the greatest part of the odium fell on Bonner. Doctor Lingard suggests some observations, which render it very probable, that neither Gardiner nor Bonner were quite so guilty as they have been generally represented.

It should not be forgotten, that Alphonsus de

* See Letter IV. on Persecution.

† See Letter V. on the Reformation.

‡ Letter IV.

Castro, a Spanish friar, and confessor to Phillip, in a sermon preached before the court, condemned these proceedings in the most pointed manner*, as contrary both to the text and the spirit of the gospel." He said, that "it was not by severity, "but by mildness, that men were to be brought "into the fold of Christ; and that it was not the "duty of bishops to seek the death, but to instruct "the ignorance of their misguided brethren."— "Many," says doctor Lingard, "were at a loss to "account for the discourse; whether it was the "spontaneous effort of the friar, or had been sug- "gested to him by the policy of Phillip, or by the "humanity of cardinal Pole, or by the repugnance "of the bishops: it made, however, a deep im- "pression." The preacher was afterwards advanced to a bishopric in Spain. Doctor Lingard also shows, that the discussion related by Hume† to have taken place between cardinal Pole and Gardiner, on the intended persecution, is altogether imaginary; and that there is no foundation for Burnet's assertion, copied by Hume, that the instructions given to the magistrates, to watch over the public peace, and, for that purpose, to apprehend the propagators of seditious reports, and the preachers of seditious doctrines, was an attempt to introduce the inquisition. He also shows, that there is no truth in the tale of the martyrdoms of the three women of Guernsey.

* Strype, iii. 209. † Chapter xxxvii.

"After every allowance," says doctor Lingard, "it will be found, that, in the space of four years, "two hundred persons perished in the flames for "religious opinions; a number, at the contempla- "tion of which the mind is struck with horror, and "learns to bless the legislation of a more tolerant "age, in which dissent from established forms, "though in some countries still punished with civil "disabilities, is nowhere liable to the penalties of "death."

You mention, in the highest terms of praise, the fortitude with which the Marian martyrs, as you call them, sustained the flames which consumed them. I admire it as much as you; but was not the fortitude of the episcopalian martyrs, in Scotland, in the reign of Charles II.*, equally heroic? and, comparing the demeanor of the Marian martyrs in their sufferings, with the demeanor of the Elizabethan martyrs in theirs, will these suffer by the comparison?

I have already declared that these sanguinary executions cannot be justified; yet, it should not be forgotten, that similar guilt is justly imputable to many sovereigns, some of whom enjoy a considerable portion of historic fame; that there was not, at this time, a protestant country in Europe, in which similar executions did not take place; or one, among the primitive reformers, by whom religious persecution was not justified; and that some,

* Laing's History of Scotland, book VII. & VIII.

who were executed in the reign of queen Mary for heresy, might have been executed for treason:—other sovereigns, more politically, but certainly not more justly, converted what they termed heresy into treason, and punished the convicted heretic, not as an heretic, but as a traitor.

You begin your account of the reign of Mary by informing us, that "the Suffolk men were the first "who declared for queen Mary; that the protestant "religion had taken root among them; and that they "had obtained a promise from her, that no altera-"tion should be made in the religion which her "brother had established." Doctor Lingard has sufficiently shown that no such promise was made. Mr. John Gage, in his "*History and Antiquities* "*of Hengrave in Suffolk*,"—the work of a gentleman and a scholar,—has inserted Mary's proclamation to the men of Suffolk: it contains no such promise; and they refer to none, in the long petition which they afterwards presented to Mary in favour of their religion.

I have now to mention an instance, in which, to aggravate the conduct of queen Mary's government, and the odium which you think it should bring upon the roman-catholics, you introduce a perfect fancy piece. You tell us, that, "on the day on which "Ridley and Latimer suffered at Oxford, the duke "of Norfolk dined with Gardiner; and that the "dinner was delayed some hours, till the bishop's "servant arrived from Oxford, post-haste, with "tidings that he had seen fire set to them; that

"Gardiner went exultingly to the duke of Norfolk "with the news, and said, 'Now let us go to din-"ner;' that, before he rose from table he was "stricken with a painful disease, and being carried "to his bed, lay there in intolerable torments for "fifteen days," ... and died. This tale was quickly refuted. The author of Fox's life, in the *Biographia Britannica*, mentions it "among the many "facts, in the relation of which Mr. Fox is not to "be depended upon."—"To disprove this tragi-"cal story, it may be sufficient to observe, that "Gardiner appeared in the house of lords after he "is reported to have been seized with the mortal "distemper; and the *old* duke of Norfolk had been "dead above a year, when Fox makes him at din-"ner with the bishop of Winchester; for he died "at Framlergham Castle, September 1554, and was "succeeded by his grandson, who could not then "be an *old duke*, as the story says. As to Gardiner, "he died of the gout, and not of a suppression of "urine, as Fox says."—The important epithet "*old*," by which the duke of Norfolk is described, you omit.—The falsehood of the story was noticed by doctor Lingard*; still it found its place in the first edition of your work. Articles afterwards appeared in different newspapers, showing the falsehood of Fox's narrative: *you* have, however, retained it in your second edition;—and long may it there remain, as proof of the little reliance that should be placed on those writers, who place *their* trust in Fox.

* Note (D.) p. 100 & 106.

You collect several contumelious expressions, which father Persons, in his Examination of your favourite author, has applied to many of the sufferers in the reign of queen Mary. Supposing your representation of them to be accurate, I sincerely condemn them; but are they as objectionable as those which father Fox,—you have informed us, that queen Elizabeth distinguished him by that appellation,—or, (I am sorry to add),—as those which you yourself, throughout your work, incessantly apply to us? I learn from you, that father Persons calls the generality of the sufferers "contemptible "and pitiful rabblement, . . . obscure and unlearned "fellows, . . . noxious, wilful beasts, . . . artificers, "spinsters, and the like people." I wish father Persons had used no offensive expression: "*Res* "*est sacra miser:*" the sufferings,—I willingly add,—the unjust sufferings of those, to whom he applies them, should have led him, whatever were his own opinion of the merits of their case, to mention them with tenderness. But how do you speak of us and our religion? There scarcely is a chapter, in either of your two volumes, which does not contain some expressions much more opprobrious than any used by father Persons. It should also be taken into account, that father Persons wrote in the days of fierce controversy; that he had before his eyes the racks and the gibbets, by which his brethren in faith had suffered, were then suffering, or were to suffer. Does not this greatly extenuate the bitterness of his pen?—*You* write in

an age of temper and philosophy;—when decency and politeness have banished *polemic* abuse from all the liberal parts of society; when oblivion of past animosities is universally recommended; when the mention of irritating subjects is avoided; when all denominations of christians wish for good humour, for mutual forbearance and charity; when some of the most amiable and most wise of your contemporaries have advocated the abolition of the penal code against the roman-catholics; when those, who think that the time for it is not arrived, avow their wish for its arrival, and ardently and anxiously exhort both parties to goodwill, to kindness, to all that can sooth, and all that conciliates;—In the midst of this general disposition to unity,—you,—a gentleman and a schqlar,—have coolly and deliberately compiled a thousand pages, admirably calculated to revive past animosities, to inflame prejudice, to perpetuate discord; and,—by holding in full view all that you think likely to injure us, and concealing almost all that you think likely to do us honour,—have endeavoured to ruin our moral and religious character, and to hold us to our fellow-subjects as an abomination. In this, where is wisdom, where is good policy, where is charity? How different is it from the conduct and the manners,—I will not say of Pitt, of Fox, of Burke, of Canning,—of our most honourable and most estimable adversaries, lord Liverpool in the upper, and Mr. Peele in the lower, house! How different is the spirit of Your Book from that which animated our sovereign, when

he invited the duke of Norfolk,—a man, who does honour to men; but a member of that religious community which it pleases you to vilify,—to officiate at his coronation? which led him to carry the olive branch to Ireland? which led him to sanction the act for dispensing with the earl marshal's obligation of taking the oath of supremacy? and the act for reversing the attainder of lord Stafford? For these exertions of kindness, of enlarged wisdom, and of liberal policy, eight millions of his majesty's British subjects bless his name:—there is not one of them who does not read your book with every feeling of insulted integrity:—and so confident are they of the universal goodwill of their fellow-subjects to them, that they are quite assured that, if you should offer the services of your pen to any of those, who, in either house, oppose, or rather seek to postpone catholic emancipation,—half-a-dozen members in both houses would not be found who would accept your offer.—"The time is gone "by,"—would be the almost unanimous voice;—"no good subject now reads with pleasure any "abuse of the roman-catholic church, or its mem-"bers. Take it to the admirers of father Fox! his "mantle has descended to you! But don't wear "it! you are qualified for much better things."

XIV. 2.

Archbishop Cranmer and Bishop Latimer.

THAT archbishop Cranmer and bishop Latimer were guilty of high treason, by an active co-operation, in the attempt of the duke of Northumberland, to place lady Jane Grey on the throne, to the exclusion of Mary, their lawful sovereign, and of the princess Elizabeth, the presumptive heir, is universally allowed. My opinion, that the sentence which, after their treason had been pardoned, condemned them to the flames for heresy, was execrable, I have explicitly averred in my "Historical Memoirs of the English, Irish, and Scottish Catholics:" I now repeat it. And, in respect to Cranmer, I also willingly repeat, that his protection of the princess Mary, from the fury of her father; his exertions to save sir Thomas More, bishop Fisher, and lord Cromwell; his long resistance to the passing of the six sanguinary articles; and his encouragement of literature, are entitled to a high degree of praise: no person can give it more willingly than I do, or wish more sincerely that his failings should rest interred with his bones. But when he is described as a model of virtue, and every effort of composition is used to exalt him, at the expense of the roman-catholics and their religion, and, by highly-coloured relations of his

virtues and sufferings, to raise a storm of public indignation against us;—then,

Facit indignatio versum,—

And I must ask some questions.

Although he adopted the Lutheran principles so early as his residence in Germany, on the business of the divorce, he yet continued, during the fifteen subsequent years of Henry's reign, in the most public profession of the catholic religion, the article of the supremacy of the pope alone excepted;—was this justifiable before God or man?

Although, when he was consecrated archbishop of Canterbury, he took the customary oath of obedience to the see of Rome, did he not, just before he took it, retire into a private room, and protest against it?—was this honourable?

Although he subscribed, and caused his clergy to subscribe, the six articles, the third and fourth of which enjoined celibacy to the clergy, and the observance of the vow of chastity, was he not married, and did he not continue to cohabit with his wife?—was not this dissimulation?

Although he knew Anne Boleyn was under no pre-contract of marriage, did he not, to use bishop Burnet's expression, extort from her, standing, as she then did, on the very verge of eternity, a confession of the existence of such a contract?—was not this culpable subserviency to his master's cruelties? was it not prevailing on the unhappy woman to die with a lie upon her lips?

Was he not instrumental in bringing Lambert, Anne Askew, Joan Bocher, Van Parr, and others, both catholics and anabaptists, to the stake?

Did he not make too successful exertions to induce the infant Edward to sign the sentence for Joan Bocher's condemnation?

Was he not, in all these instances, guilty, both of the theory and practice of religious persecution?

Did he not, previously to Henry's marriage with Anne of Cleves, declare, that the negotiations for her marriage, with a prince of the house of Lorraine, were not a lawful impediment to her marriage with Henry? yet, did he not, within six months after the marriage, declare, that they had created such an impediment?—was not this a deliberate and solemn untruth? Did he not then solemnize the monarch's adulterous marriage with lady Katharine Howard?—was not this a sacrilege? And, finally, notwithstanding the undoubted rights of the princesses Mary and Elizabeth to the throne, did he not, on the death of their royal brother, strive to exclude them from it, and to place lady Jane Grey upon it?—was not this both ingratitude and high treason?

Can you justify his conduct in any one of these instances, without incurring the flagrant guilt of making "vice, virtue?"

Still, the sentence which, after he had been pardoned for his treason, condemned him to the flames for heresy, was,—I repeat the word,—execrable. His firmness under the torture, to which it consigned

him, has seldom been surpassed: it presents an imposing example, and we then willingly forget what history records against him. But when we read in the *Biographia Britannica*, and in other works, that "he was the glory of the English "nation, and the ornament of the reformation;" and prejudice against the roman-catholics is, by these representations of his virtues, sought to be aggravated,—his misdeeds rush on our recollection; we are astonished at the effect of party spirit, and the intrepidity of his biographers and encomiasts.

As to *Latimer*, whom you so highly celebrate;—was he not more remarkable for inconsistency, than almost any other man with whose biography you are acquainted? Was he not first known by his attack upon the doctrines of Melancthon, and the other German reformers? then by his advocation of these doctrines? then by his rejection of them, in obedience to the commands of Wolsey? then by his re-assumption of them? then by his second rejection of them, and his craving pardon for them, on his knees, to sooth Henry VIII? then by his second re-assumption of them in the reign of Edward VI? Was he not actively and prominently engaged in the treasons against Mary? Is such a man a hero? You are a classical scholar; but surely, when you panegyrised Latimer, you had not in your mind the saying of the antient, —that when, in any nation, exuberant praise of a mediocrity of virtue became common, the existence in it of real virtue becomes questionable.

Compare his conduct with that of More, Fisher, or any of the three hundred persons who suffered death under your penal laws.

Crimination is not my disposition; I trust it is not my character: on this occasion, you, and those whom you have condescended to copy, (for I am sensible they are greatly your inferiors,) have forced it on me. Now, therefore, after hearing what I have been thus forced to say, permit me to ask, whether, in your opinion, those who provoke discussions of the lives and characters of the two prelates I have mentioned, are real friends to their memories?

I possess a picture-book for children, published by an eminent protestant clergyman, now living, in which the fires of Smithfield are vividly represented. Is not this most imprudent? And, as it contains no representations of the racks, the gibbets, or the fires, by which the roman-catholics suffered, in the reigns of queen Elizabeth and her three successors, is not the representation both partial and unjust? It is time that this wretched ribaldry should cease. I make you the same offer as doctor Milner made to the late doctor Sturges: —Let protestants cease to reproach the roman-catholics with Mary's fires, and roman-catholics shall be equally silent on the sanguinary code of Elizabeth, and the savage executions under it.

XIV. 3.

Character of Queen Mary's Reign.

You boldly term it *execrable:* I hope that, when you wrote this word, you had not read doctor Lingard's account of it, and the excellent summary and observations by which his account of it is concluded. If you had, it would appear to me wonderful that you should express yourself in the manner you have done. The whole passage is too long for insertion; I shall transcribe the first page.

"The foulest blot on the character of this queen "is her long and cruel persecution of the reformers. "The sufferings of the victims naturally begat an "antipathy to the woman by whose authority they "were inflicted. It is, however, but fair to recol- "lect, what I have already noticed, that the extir- "pation of erroneous doctrine was inculcated as "a duty by the leaders of every religious party. "Mary only practised what *they* taught. It was her "misfortune, rather than her fault, that she was "not more enlightened than the wisest of her "contemporaries.

"With this exception, she has been ranked by "the more moderate of the reformed writers "among the best, though not the greatest of our "princes. They have borne honourable testimony "to her virtues: have allotted to her the praise "of piety and clemency, of compassion for the "poor, and liberality to the distressed; and have

" recorded her solicitude to restore to opulence the " families that had been unjustly deprived of their " possessions by her father and brother, and to pro- " vide for the wants of the parochial clergy, who " had been reduced to penury by the spoliations of " the last government. It is acknowledged, that " her moral character is beyond reproof. It ex- " torted respect from all; even from the most viru- " lent of her enemies. The ladies of her house- " hold copied the conduct of their mistress; and " the decency of Mary's court was often mentioned " with applause, by those who lamented the dis- " soluteness which prevailed in that of her suc- " cessor."

To the eternal praise of the Irish roman-catholics be it remembered, that, in the reign of queen Mary, they totally abstained from persecution.—" In the " reign of queen Mary," says sir William Parnel, " though the religious feelings of Irish catholics, " and their feelings as men, had been treated with " very little ceremony during the two preceding " reigns, they made a wise and moderate use of " their ascendancy. They entertained no resent- " ment for the past, they raised no plans for fu- " ture domination.—THE IRISH ROMAN-CATHOLIC " BIGOTS!!—THE IRISH ROMAN-CATHOLICS ARE " THE ONLY SECT THAT EVER RESUMED POWER, " WITHOUT EXERCISING VENGEANCE *."

* Historical Apology.

LETTER XV.

QUEEN ELIZABETH.

SIR,

WE now reach the most important reign in the histories both of your church and mine since the reformation. I shall mention in this letter,—I. The establishment of the protestant religion in the reign of queen Elizabeth; and notice some statements and observations respecting it in "the Book of the "Church:"—II. Then insert a summary of the laws passed in her reign against the roman-catholics:—III. Then state the executions of the roman-catholics under the sanguinary part of this code:—IV. Then consider the arguments offered in justification of these executions, from the general disloyalty of the roman-catholics:—V. From their persecuting principles:—VI. And from their alleged plots:—VII. I shall then notice what you entirely omit mentioning, their exemplary conduct while England was threatened by the Spanish Armada:—VIII. And conclude the letter with observations on some other charges contained in your letter.

XV. 1.

The Establishment of the Protestant Religion in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth.—Observation on some Statements respecting it in "the Book of the Church."

You begin the chapter, which I now have under consideration, by informing us, that "Eliza-

" beth's life had been in imminent danger during " her sister's reign;" and by noticing " the seve- " rity with which she had been treated." But can you read the evidence produced by doctor Lingard *, of the concurrence of Elizabeth in Wyat's treason, and the earl of Devonshire's conspiracy, without believing her guilt? Can you say, that the evidence for it is not stronger than that upon which she caused the unfortunate Mary of Scotland to be executed? You then inform us, that " the cruelties of the preceding reign were regarded " with abhorrence by all, except those who had " been instrumental in them." The number of *those* must have been extremely small; justice, therefore, forbids that these cruelties should be imputed to the general body of catholics, and calls upon you to retract, in the next edition of your work, your repeated intimations to the contrary in the present.

Notwithstanding the dislike of Elizabeth, which I must necessarily feel, I have never read Heylin's account of her triumphant progress from the tower, without participating in that brilliant hour of joy. To see the descendant of a hundred kings, in the prime of life, and adorned with every accomplishment, thus suddenly pass, amidst a general and jubilant multitude, from a prison to a throne, is one of the brightest scenes that history displays. Most feelingly do I enter into it, and forget, at the moment, the multiplied miseries which it brought,

* Vol. v. c. 1.

almost immediately afterwards, on numbers of those whose memories I must ever revere.

But did not the duty, which you owed to history, require that you should mention the loyal conduct of the leading roman-catholic clergy and laity on the accession of Elizabeth to the throne of England; and contrast it with the conduct of the protestant clergy and laity on the accession of Mary? Cranmer, Ridley and Latimer, and most of those who took a leading part in the religious innovations in the reign of Edward VI. supported the pretension of lady Jane Grey against their lawful sovereign. Northumberland's rebellion in favour of lady Jane was succeeded by Wyat's; and many of the leaders of each were protestants. At the moment of Mary's decease, both houses of parliament were sitting. Information of the event being brought to the house of lords, they sent a message to the house of commons, requesting their attendance. When the commons arrived, Heath, the lord chancellor, the archbishop of York, (the see of Canterbury being then vacant), announced the event; he observed, that the succession of the crown belonged of right to the princess Elizabeth, and that she should be instantly proclaimed queen of England. The proclamation of her title immediately took place; first, in Westminster Hall, before the assembled lords and commons, and then, at the same place, before the lord mayor, the aldermen, and the companies of the city. The news reached the princess at Hatfield:

she proceeded to London. At Highgate she was met by all the roman-catholic bishops: all, except Oglethorpe, the bishop of Carlisle, by whom she was crowned, refused to assist at the ceremony of her coronation. They considered it to be certain, either that she would not take or would not observe the oath, which the kings of England took at their coronation,—"to maintain the laws, honour, "peace and privileges of the church, as in the time "or grant of king Edward the Confessor." But the bishops did not make the smallest opposition to her coronation; they immediately did homage to her, and acknowledged her title to the crown. They afterwards saw her break her coronation oath, and establish the protestant church on the ruins of the national religion. At these measures they sighed; but they sighed in silence; not a single act of a treasonable, a seditious, or even a disaffected tendency was ever imputed to their conduct upon this occasion.

May I not also ask, whether historic truth did not require you to mention the violence which the court party found it necessary to use in the election of members to serve in the first parliament which sat in the reign of queen Elizabeth? Five candidates were nominated by the court to each borough, and three to each county; and, by the authority of the sheriffs, the members were chosen from among these candidates. Can it be said, that, with a house of commons thus constructed, the parliament which

established the reformation, was constitutionally formed?

Did not historic truth also require, that you should mention the opposition of the clergy to the legal establishment of the protestant faith? and that all the bishops, both the houses of convocation, and both the universities, strenuously objected to it? These are important facts: was it proper to suppress them?

You assert, that "the policy of the romanists "fortunately accorded with the views of govern- "ment; for that, when it was perceived how well "and easily the places of the deposed bishops had "been supplied, the party changed their system, "and determined *to retain what benefices they held* "*at the expense of outward conformity*, thinking "the best service they could render to the papal "cause, was to keep possession of their posts, in "the hope and expectation of better times. The "double purpose would thus be answered, of keep- "ing protestant ministers out, and secretly fost- "ering in their parishioners a predilection for all "the old superstitions; and their policy was, by "this means, reconciled with their interests. With "such unanimity did they act upon *this deceitful* "*system*, that, of 9,400 beneficed clergy, only 177 "resigned their preferments, rather than acknow- "ledge the queen's supremacy."

The charge which you bring against the roman-catholic clergy in this place, is altogether un-

founded. The outward conformity of which you accuse them, was never practised by them: no roman-catholic clergyman, who retained his benefice, could either officiate as minister, or take the oath of supremacy, without incurring the guilt of apostacy, both in his own opinion and feelings, and in the opinion and feeling of the whole catholic world. If he had urged, in his defence, that he did it with the deceitful views you insinuate, his conduct would have been more strongly reprobated. I believe the whole of your statement to be a fable; I never heard the charge which it intimates, until I found it in your work: it remains for you to prove the facts, or produce the authorities, upon which you make the assertion.

I conjecture, that, in the hurry of composition, you have substituted an occasional conformity of your own imagination, for one of a very different nature, which, for some time, was practised by some *lay roman-catholics*. These, to avoid the dreadful penalties of recusancy, attended the service in the protestant churches on Sundays, but without professing themselves to be protestants, and without participating in the service further than by mere personal attendance upon it. On the lawfulness of this proceeding, a considerable difference prevailed, from the first, among the English catholic divines: it continued till the year 1562, when some of the theologians, assembled at the council of Trent, were consulted upon it, and pronounced

it unlawful *. Before this time, both cardinal Allen and father Persons had declared against it, in the most explicit manner; and each had published a treatise in support of his opinion.

I am not surprised by your assertion, that, of 9,400 ecclesiastical incumbents, 177 only resigned their preferments, on the accession of queen Elizabeth, as I have met with this assertion in several respectable authors; but an attentive consideration of it, has convinced me that it is erroneous. Wood † informs us, that, "after the catholics had "left the university of Oxford, upon the alteration "of religion, it was so empty, that there was very "seldom a sermon preached in the university "church. The university," he adds, "seemed "to be destroyed." So lately as 1563, the speaker of the house of commons complained, that "many "of the schools and benefices were seized, the "education of youth disappointed, and the succours "for knowledge cut off. This," said the speaker, "I dare aver, that the schools in England are "fewer than formerly by one hundred, and many "of them but slenderly stocked; and this is one "reason, the number of men is so remarkably "diminished. The universities are decayed, and "great market towns are without either school "or preacher ‡." You know how frequently such representations occur in the histories of those times:

* Dodd's Church Hist. vol. 2, p. 24.

† Cited in Dodd's Church Hist. vol. 2, p. 319.

‡ Collier's Ecc. Hist. vol. 2, p. 480.

could the fact have been as they represent it, if your assertion had been founded? Besides,—I have before me doctor Bridgewater's "*Concertatio,*" published in 1594: he gives in it the names, and the rank or condition in life, of 1,200 roman-catholics, who had been deprived of their livings or estates, or had been imprisoned or banished for their religion, previously to the year 1588, the period when the persecution of the catholics began to rise to its greatest height. He does not include in this list, those who suffered death for their religion; these he had mentioned, and had described their several sufferings in the former parts of his work. He declares, that he was far from having named all the sufferers, and that he had mentioned the names of those only, whose sufferings had come to his personal knowledge: many, whose names he mentions, died in prison, and some under sentence of death. Is not there ground, therefore, for questioning the truth of the assertions I have noticed?

You mention, with praise, the moderation of the conduct of queen Elizabeth, in respect to the roman-catholics, at the beginning of her reign. I agree with you, in lauding the feelings which induced her to direct, that the supplication,—"From the tyranny of the bishop of Rome, and all "his detestable enormities, deliver us, O Lord!"—should be omitted from the litany. I also think, that her directions, that the sacramental bread should be kept in the form of wafers; and that the

language of the article, which affirmed the real presence, should be framed in ambiguous language, proceeded from a desire of making the pale of her new church as comprehensive as possible. May I be permitted to add, without offence, that the consideration which I have given to the history of queen Elizabeth has led me to suppose, that the queen was indifferent to all religions; that her taste inclined to the roman-catholic, and her interest to the protestant; that Leicester, Cecil and Walsingham, her principal ministers, were influenced, in their opposition to the catholic religion, both by inclination and interest; that they had a strong bias towards the puritan faith and discipline; and that they possessed, in a great degree,—a degree, perhaps, much greater than their sovereign,—the spirit of intolerance, which tarnished the character of the first reformers?

XV. 2.

Summary of the Laws passed in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth against Roman-catholics.

I SHALL first mention, as succinctly as possible, the principal laws which were passed against the roman-catholics during the reign of queen Elizabeth; then show, in what manner they were executed.

1. By an act passed in *the first year of her reign*, and usually called the "*Act of Supremacy*," archbishops, bishops, and other ecclesiastical officers

and ministers, and generally all persons receiving the queen's fee, were required to take the oath of supremacy prescribed by it: such as refused were incapacitated from holding any office; and all who denied the queen's supremacy were, for the first offence, punishable by forfeiture of goods and chattels; for the second, subjected to the penalties of a premunire; and, for the third, rendered guilty of high treason.

It is proper to observe, in this place, that the oath of supremacy, prescribed by this act, was essentially different from the oath of supremacy in present use. By the latter oath, the person swears negatively, that no foreign prince or potentate hath any authority within this realm; by the former, he swore affirmatively, that the queen was head of the church. The present oath is taken without scruple by the protestant dissenters; and it was to favour them, that the negative form was adopted in the reign of William III.: the former oath was as inconsistent with the principles of the protestant dissenters, as it was with the principles of the roman-catholics.

I beg leave to call your attention to this observation, when you prepare a new edition of your work.

2. By another act, passed *in the first year of queen Elizabeth*,—then usually called "*the Act of* "*Uniformity*,"—all ministers of the church were enjoined to use the Book of Common Prayer, under certain penalties; others were inflicted on those

who spoke in derogation of it, or prevented its use: Those who absented themselves from church, were subjected to a forfeiture of one shilling to the poor for every Sunday upon which they should so absent themselves; and of twenty pounds to the king, if they continued such absence for a month together; and, if they kept in their house an inmate guilty of such absence, they were to forfeit ten pounds for every such month: Every fourth Sunday of absence was held to complete the month; and thus, in relation to these penalties, thirteen months were supposed to occur in every year.

3. By an act passed in the *fifth year of the queen*, persons maintaining the authority of the pope, were subjected to the penalties of a premunire; and ecclesiastical persons, fellows of colleges in the university, and officers of courts of justice, were compellable to take the oath of supremacy, under the same penalty of premunire for the first offence, and the penalties of high treason for the second: and persons who had said or heard mass, might have the oath tendered to them; and their refusal of it was punishable by the same penalties.

4. The act of the *thirteenth of her majesty* enacted, that persons who affirmed that queen Elizabeth was not a lawful sovereign; or that any other had a preferable title; or that she was an heretic, schismatic, or infidel; or that the right to the crown and the succession could not be determined by law; and persons bringing or receiving bulls,

briefs, or absolutions, from the pope,—were to be deemed guilty of high treason; their aiders or abettors were made guilty of a premunire; persons concealing them were punishable for misprision of treason; and priests bringing Agnus Deis, or similar articles, blessed by the pope, were subjected to premunire.

The pecuniary mulcts for recusancy were rigidly required. The money thus raised from the catholics amounted to a large sum: it was chiefly levied on the poor, the rich purchasing, from Elizabeth, dispensations from attendance at the protestant service. Mr. Andrews * computes the annual amount of the money, thus received by Elizabeth for dispensations, at twenty thousand pounds.

5. The act of *the twenty-third of queen Elizabeth* subjected all persons, pretending to have power to withdraw her majesty's subjects from their allegiance, or from the established religion, or moving them to promise obedience to the see of Rome, or any other potentate, to the punishment of high treason: Persons so withdrawn, their aiders and abettors, and persons knowing of such practices and not disclosing them, were rendered guilty of misprison of treason. Every priest saying mass, was to forfeit two hundred marks; every person hearing it, was to forfeit one hundred; and each was to be imprisoned for a year, and till he had paid the fine. This statute also aggravated the penalties of recusancy, and contained other severe inflictions.

* Continuation of Henry's Hist. vol. 2, p. 35.

6. The still severer act of the *twenty-seventh year of her majesty's* reign, enacted, 1. that all jesuits, seminary and other priests, within the realm, should depart out of it, under pain of being judged traitors, and suffering death, as in the case of treason; and jesuits, seminary and other priests, coming into the realm, were subjected to the same penalties: 2. Persons receiving or maintaining them, were to be adjudged felons, without benefit of clergy: 3. Persons sending money to the seminaries, or to any of their inmates, were subjected to the penalties of a premunire: 4. And persons knowing of any such priest, and not discovering him within twelve days, were to be fined and imprisoned at the king's pleasure.—It should be observed, that the punishment of *premunire*, mentioned in this and the other statutes, to which I have referred, was, that, from the time of conviction, the convict should be out of the protection of the king, and his lands and goods forfeited to him; and that his body should remain at the king's pleasure.

7. To these inflictions we must add, *the court of high commission*, established by queen Elizabeth, under the provisions of an act passed in the first year of her reign. Agreeing in little else, Hume* and Neale† perfectly accord in their accounts of the unconstitutional nature and arbitrary rules of this tribunal, and of the enormities of its proceedings. "It was," says the former of these writers, "a real inquisition, attended with all the iniquities

* Hist. of England, c. 12.

† History of the Puritans, vol. 1, p. 10.

"as well as cruelties inseparable from that tribu-"nal." It was aimed against all dissenters from the established religion; but the roman-catholics were the principal sufferers under it. Permit me to express some surprise, that I do not find, in the present chapter of your work, a single word of bitter condemnation of the institution of this unconstitutional, cruel, and iniquitous tribunal.

You say, that "the proceedings of Elizabeth's "government, both towards the papists and puri-"tans, were grounded upon these principles: that "conscience is not to be constrained, but won by "force of truth, with the aid of time, and use of all "good means of persuasion; and that cases of con-"science, when they exceed their bounds, and "grow to be matter of faction, lose their nature; "and however they may be coloured with the pre-"tence of religion, are then to be restrained and "punished."

But,—had faction been proved against any, when the first laws against recusancy were published; or when the court of high commission was established? Do you not, in this place, to justify the penalties for recusancy, unwaringly adopt the most objectionable tenet of intolerance: that theological opinion is to be the test of civil allegiance? And thus make it just and fair to infer, from a person's holding a theological opinion contrary to the religion of the state, that his allegiance is unsound; and that he should, therefore, be punished for the unsoundness of it, by pains, penalties and disabili-

ties? It was in consequence of the adoption of this principle, that the roman-catholics and presbyterians suffered in England during the reign of queen Elizabeth, and her three next successors; and that presbyterians suffered in Scotland during the reign of Charles II. You say the puritans grew to matter of faction: But which preceded the other? did the law precede the faction, or the faction precede the law?

You treat the points in difference between the established church and puritans as trifles; or, as you call them, after Calvin, "tolerable fooleries." But who is to be the judge, in these cases, of what is important, and what is trifling and foolery? If you say the state,—then the Roman magistrate justly punished the christians for what he considered their trifling and foolish non-conformity to the pontifical law of Rome. If you deny this power to the Roman state, but ascribe it to the English parliament, I call upon you to declare the ground of this distinction: if it is, because the latter had the Bible, which the Roman state had not, I ask you, why the puritan interpretation of the Bible should not be thought as good as that of the establishment?

Elizabeth, you intimate, foresaw danger in the principles of the puritans. But do principles, before they come into action, justify actual persecution?—Besides,—did the principle of the puritans amount to more than the principle professed by all protestants as the basis of their religion,—that they acknowledge no divine law but the scriptures; no

interpreter of them but the understanding and conscience of the individual who peruses them?

You mention some calumnies and hearsay stories, printed by two Spanish or Portuguese monks: but what are we to say to the calumnies against the roman-catholics, respecting the fire of London, Oates's plot, and "the hundreds of the ghosts of "protestants drowned by the rebels at Portadown "bridge, who," as Temple avers in his history of the Irish rebellion, "were seen in the river, bolt-upright, "and were heard to cry out for revenge on the Irish "rebels. One of them," he says, "was seen with "hands lifted up, and standing in that posture "from the twenty-ninth of December to the latter "end of the following month."

Surely it now is full time that all this laughable, but mischievous trifling and foolery, should have an end!

XV. 3.

Executions of the Roman-catholics under the sanguinary part of the Penal Code of Queen Elizabeth.

I HAVE shortly mentioned their sufferings under the enactments against recusancy, I now proceed to mention the inflictions under the sanguinary provisions of some of these acts.

The total number of those who suffered capitally under them is calculated by Dodd, in his Church History, at one hundred and ninety-one; further inquiries by doctor Milner increase their

number to two hundred and four. Fifteen of these, he says, were condemned for denying the queen's supremacy; one hundred and twenty-six for the exercise of priestly functions; and the others for being reconciled to the catholic faith, or aiding or assisting priests. In this list, no person is included who was executed for any plot, either real or imaginary, except eleven, who suffered for the pretended plot of Rheims, or Rome; a plot, which, as doctor Milner justly observes, was so daring a forgery, that even Camden, the partial biographer of Elizabeth, allows the sufferers to have been political victims.

Such then being the number of sufferers, we must feel some surprise, when we read in Hume's history, that "the severity of death was sparingly "exercised against the priests in the reign of queen "Elizabeth;" or your eulogizing account of her tolerating principles and proceedings.

It is observable, that the punishment of treason, by the law of England, is, that the offender should be drawn to the gallows, hanged by the neck, cut down alive, his entrails taken out while he is yet alive, and his head then cut off. Against the atrocious circumstances attending this punishment, the humanity of the nation has so far interfered, that the offender has been generally permitted to remain hanging till he is dead; but this mercy was often denied to the catholics, who suffered under these laws: often they were cut down alive; in that state ripped open, and their entrails torn out.

Besides the sufferers whom we have noticed, mention is made in the same work of ninety catholic priests or laymen, who died in prison during the same reign; and of one hundred and five others who were sent into perpetual banishment. "I say "nothing," continues the writer, "of many more, "who were whipped, fined, (the fine for recusancy "was twenty pounds), or stripped of their property, "to the utter ruin of their families. In one night "fifty catholic gentlemen, in the county of Lan- "caster, were suddenly seized and committed to "prison, on account of their non-attendance at "church. About the same time, I find an equal "number of Yorkshire gentlemen lying prisoners "in York Castle, on the same account; most of "them perished there. These were, every week "for a twelvemonth together, dragged by main "force to hear the established service performed in "the castle chapel."

Incredible as it may appear to an English reader, it is unquestionably true, that several of those who suffered death, and several also who did not suffer capitally, were, previously to their trials, inhumanly tortured,—*by the common rack*, by which their limbs were stretched with levers, to a length too shocking to mention, beyond the natural measure of their frame;—or, *the hoop, called the scavenger's daughter*, within which they were placed, and their bodies bent until the head and feet met;—or, *by confinement in the Little-ease*, a hole so small, that a person could neither stand,

sit, or lie straight in it;—or, *the iron gauntlet*, a screw that squeezed the hands until the bones were crushed;—by *needles thrust under the nails* of the sufferers;—or, by *a long deprivation of sustenance*.

It adds to the atrocity of these inflictions, that, in several instances, when the sufferers were put to trial, there was no legal proof established; and, in some, not even any legal evidence offered to substantiate the offence of which the parties were accused. "It may be almost asserted," says the late lord Auckland *, "that, so late as the whole six-"teenth century, the first and most essential prin-"ciples of evidence were either unknown or totally "disregarded. Depositions of witnesses, forth-"coming if called, but not permitted to be con-"fronted with the prisoner; written examinations "of accomplices living and amenable; confessions "of convicts lately hanged for the same offence; "hearsays of those convicts, repeated at second-"hand from others; all these formed so many "classes of competent evidence, and were received "as such, in the most solemn trials, by very learned "judges. It was a common and very lucrative "practice of the sheriffs, to return juries so pre-"judiced and partial, that, as cardinal Wolsey "observed, they would find Abel guilty of the "murder of Cain. The judge held his office and "income at the pleasure of the prosecutor; and "was often actuated by an intemperate zeal for the

* Principles of Penal Law.

" support of the charge, as if his indignation of " the offence had stifled all tenderness towards the " supposed offender.

" Thus ignorant of the forms and language of " the whole process, unassisted by council, unsup- " ported by witnesses, discountenanced by the court, " and baited by the crown lawyers, the poor bewil- " dered prisoners found an eligible refuge in the " dreadful moment of conviction."

Recourse was had to tortures, in order to supply this want of legal evidence to convict the accused; and, at the same time, to furnish proofs against others. At the end of "*Cecil's Execution* " *of Justice,*" is usually printed, "*A Declaration* " *of the favorable dealing of her majesty's com-* " *missioners, appointed for the examination of cer-* " *tayne traiterers, and of tortures unjustly reported* " *to be done upon them for matters of religion.*" It first appeared in print in 1583, in black letter, and was comprised in six pages quarto. It admits the use of torture in these cases, and states the grounds on which it was defended. It is inserted in the second volume of *the Harleian Miscellany, printed in* 1808.

As a fair specimen of the manner in which the laws, which I have mentioned, were executed against the roman-catholics, I shall insert an account of the apprehension, trial and execution of father Campian.

The best account of it is to be found in "*Doctor* " *Challoner's Memoirs of Missionary Priests, as*

" *well secular as regular, and of other catholics, of* " *both sexes, that have suffered Death in England* " *on religious accounts, from the year of our Lord* "·1577 *to* 1684," *two volumes* 8vo. first printed in 1741, and since often reprinted. A new edition of this work is now in the press of Mr. Ambrose Cuddon, Carthusian-street Charterhouse-square: it contains several engravings, showing the manner in which the tortures were inflicted; these, it is impossible to behold without shuddering*. Mr. Cuddon has inserted in this edition, a translation from the Latin of a diary kept by the reverend Mr. Rushton, a prisoner in the Tower, from 1580 to 1585, in which he gives a description of the various modes of torture inflicted on the catholic prisoners during these four years; and mentions the names of the persons upon whom they were inflicted. It was first published in Latin at the end of " Sanderus " de Schismate Anglicano, Coloniæ Agrippinæ, " 1678, 8vo †."

* " The sight of the instruments of torture produced in " Gordon of Earlston, instant madness, by his horror and " despair."—Laing's History of Scotland, vol. 4, p. 141.— Does " the Book of the Church" contain one word that reprobates the use of them on the poor innocent priests?

† See also " Doctor Bridgewater's Concertatio," already noticed in the text, and " the Arraignment of Edmund Cam- " pian, Sherwin, Bosgrave, Cottam, Bristow, Kimber, and " others, for high treason, 24 Elizabeth;" first published in the " Phœnix Britannicus," and recently in " Cobbet's com- " plete Collection of State Trials," vol. 1, p. 1050. See also " Strype's Annals," vol. 2, c. 3, 4. p. 645, 646.

On the 15th July 1581, father Campian was apprehended in a secret room in the house of a catholic gentleman. After remaining two days in the custody of the sheriff of Berkshire, he was conveyed by slow journies to London, on horseback; his legs fastened under the horse, his arms tied behind him, and a paper placed on his hat, on which were written the words, "*Campian the seditious Jesuit*," in large capital letters. On the 25th, he was delivered to the lieutenant of the Tower. He was frequently examined before the lord chancellor, or other members of the council, and by commissioners appointed by them. He was required to divulge what houses he had frequented; by whom he had been relieved; whom he had reconciled,—when, which way, for what purpose, and by what commission he had come into the realm; how, where, and by whom he printed his books. All these questions he declined to answer. In order, therefore, to extort answers from him, he was first laid on the rack, and his limbs stretched a little, to show him, as the executioners termed it, what the rack was. He persisted in his refusal;—then, for several days successively, the torture was increased; and, on the two last occasions, he was so cruelly torn and rent, that he expected to expire under the torment. Whilst upon the rack, he called continually upon God; and prayed fervently for his tormentors, and for those by whose orders they acted.

In your fifteenth letter, you mention, that, "in "the reign of Elizabeth, a public disputation was "appointed, not, as in Mary's reign, by burning "those who differed in opinion from the ruling "power, but with full liberty of speech, and per- "fect safety for the romish disputants." While father Campian was in prison, a disputation took place between him and some protestant divines, appointed for that purpose by government: the consequence to the dissentient from the ruling power, was the same as in queen Mary's reign,—within a few days after it took place, Campian was executed.

On the 12th of November, he and his companions were indicted for high treason;—the indictment stated, "that, in the last March and April, "at Rheims, in Champagne, Rome, and other parts "beyond the seas, he had conspired the death of "her majesty, the overthrow of the religion pro- "fessed in England, the subversion of the state; "and that, for the attempt thereof, they had stirred "up strangers to invade the realm; moreover, "that, on the 8th of the May following, they took "their journey from Rheims towards England, to "persuade and seduce the queen's subjects to the "romish religion, and obedience to the pope, from "their duties and allegiance to her highness; and "that, on the 1st of June, they arrived in this "country for the same purposes."

After the indictment was read,—"I protest to "God," said Campian, "and his angels, by heaven

" and earth, and before this tribunal,—which I pray
" God may be a mirror of the judgment to come,—
" that I am not guilty of these treasons, or any
" other. To prove these things against me is im-
" possible."

The prisoners were then arraigned, and severally pleaded not guilty.

On the 20th of November, they were put to the bar for trial. Six were arraigned with Campian; seven more arraigned on the following day: all, except one, were priests. When, according to custom, Campian was required to hold up his hand, —" both his arms," writes a person present at his trial, " being pitifully benumbed by his often cruel
" rackings before, and having them wrapped in a
" fur cuff, he was not able to lift up his hand so
" high as the rest did, and was required of him;
" but one of his companions kissing his hands, so
" abused for the confession of Christ, took off his
" cuff, and so lifted up his arm as high as he could,
" and he pleaded ' not guilty,' as the rest did."

The first witness produced by the crown, named Caddy or Craddock, deposed generally against all the prisoners, that, " being beyond the seas, he
" had heard of the holy vow, made between the
" pope and the English priests, for restoring and
" establishing religion in England; for which
" purpose two hundred priests should come into
" the realm. The which matter was declared to sir
" Ralph Shelly, an English knight, and captain to

" the pope; and that he would conduct an army " into England, for subduing the realm unto the " pope, and the destroying of the heretics. Whereto " sir Ralph made answer, that he would rather " drink poison with Themistocles, than see the " overthrow of his country; and added, that he " thought the catholics in England would first stand " in arms against the pope, before they would join " in such an enterprise."

You must be amazed that such evidence could have been offered: evidence, in which nothing could be brought home to the prisoners; and which, if it did prove any thing, proved only the good disposition of the general body of the catholics to the government.

The two next facts were the allegations of the queen's council, that Campian had conversed with the cardinal of Sicily and the bishop of Ross upon the bull of Pius V. The particulars of these conversations were not mentioned, nor was the slightest evidence produced to show that they had taken place.

The next fact charged on Campian was, that he travelled from Prague to Rome, and held a private conference with doctor Allen, to withdraw the people from their allegiance. No proof of either of these facts were offered: but Campian candidly admitted his journey, a conversation with doctor Allen, and his mission into this country; but observed, that the sole object of it was to administer

spiritual aid to the catholics; and that cardinal Allen had strictly charged, nay, commanded him, not to meddle with matters of state or government.

A letter written by Campian was then produced, in which he grieved for having mentioned on the rack the names of some roman-catholic gentlemen, by whom he had been entertained; but comforted himself with the reflection, that he had never discovered any secrets therein declared. Campian replied, "that every priest was bound by vow, under "danger of perpetual curse and damnation, never "to disclose any offence or infirmity revealed to "him in confession." That, "in consequence of "his priesthood, he was accustomed to be privy to "divers men's secrets,—not such as concerned the "state or commonwealth,—but such as charged "the grieved soul and conscience, whereof he had "power of absolution."

The clerk then produced certain oaths, to be ministered to the people, for renouncing obedience to her majesty, and swearing allegiance to the pope; which papers were said to have been found in the house, in which Campian had lurked. It does not however appear that any evidence was offered, either respecting the discovery of these papers, or the places in which they were said to have been found. Campian observed, that there was no proof that he had any concern in those papers; that many other persons, besides himself, had frequented the houses in which he was said to have lurked: so that there was nothing which brought the charge home to

himself. As to administering an oath of any kind, he declared, that "he would not commit an offence "so opposite to his profession, for all the substance "and treasure in the world."

Finally came the searching charge. "You "refuse," said the counsel for the crown, "to "swear to the oath of supremacy."—"I acknow- "ledge," answered Campian, "her highness as "my governess and sovereign; I acknowledge, be- "fore the commissioners, her majesty, both *de* "*facto et de jure*, to be my queen; I confess an "obedience due to the crown, as my temporal "head and primate:—this I said then, this I say "now. As for excommunicating her majesty,— "it was exacted of me,—admitting that excommu- "nicating were of effect, and that the pope had "sufficient power so to do, whether then I thought "myself discharged of my allegiance, or not? I "said this was a dangerous question; and they, "who demanded this, demanded my blood: but "I never admitted any such matter; neither ought "I to be wrested with any such suppositions. Well! "since once more it need be answered,—I say, "generally, that these matters are merely spiritual "points of doctrine, and disputable in schools; no "part of mine indictment, nor given in evidence, "and unfit to be discussed in the king's bench. "To conclude: they are no matters of fact; they "be not in the trial of the country: the jury "ought not to take any notice of them."

The judge then proceeded to the other pri-

soners: the evidence produced against them was of the same nature with that which was urged against Campian. The jury retired, and, after deliberating an hour, found them all guilty.

On the first of the following December, Campian was led to execution. He was dragged to it on a hurdle; his face was often covered with mud; and the people good-naturedly wiped it off. He ascended the scaffold;—there, he again denied all the treasons of which he had been accused. He was required "to ask forgiveness of the queen:" he meekly answered, "wherein have I offended "her? In this I am innocent; this is my last "breath; in this give me credit,—I have, and "I do pray for her." Lord Charles Howard asked him, "for which queen he prayed,—whether "for Elizabeth the queen?" Campian replied, "Yes, for Elizabeth, your queen and my queen." He then took his last leave of the spectators, and, turning his eyes towards heaven, the cart was drawn away. "His mild death, and sincere protestations "of innocence," says the writer from whence this account is taken, "moved the people to such com-"passion and tears, that the adversaries of the "catholics were glad to excuse his death." Hollingshed says, "Campian had won a marvellous "good report, to be such a man as his like was "not to be found, for life, learning, or any other "quality that might beautify a man."—"All "parties," says Mr. Chalmers, in his Biographical

Dictionary, "allow him to have been a most ex-"traordinary man; of admirable parts, an eloquent "orator, a subtle disputant, an exact preacher, "both in Latin and English, and a man of good "temper and address."

"Certain it is," you say, "that Campian and "his companions suffered for points of state, and "not of faith." I entreat you to peruse their trials; you will find them in the first volume of the State Trials. I call upon you to mention a single instance of a crime against allegiance to the queen, which was proved against them.

You insert a frightful account of the jesuits.—Few persons, I believe, have considered the accusations brought against that society, or their vindications, with more attention, or greater impartiality, than myself. The result I have given to the public, in my "Historical Memoirs of the English, Irish, "and Scottish Catholics *," and in a separate publication †. These I have more than once re-considered, and I have found nothing said in them, in the defence or praise of the society, that I ought to recall. You conclude what you say respecting them, by informing us, that "the fourth and peculiar vow "of the jesuits placed them, as missionaries, at the ab-"solute disposal of the Old Man of the Mountain,"—alluding to the celebrated, and perhaps fabulous, Prince of the Assassins, mentioned by some of the

* Chapter xxvi.

† Historical Memoirs of the Society of Jesus, 8vo. 1823.

historians of the crusades. "The popes," you proceed to say, "richly deserved this title 'of the "Man of the Mountain;' for the principle of assas- "sination was sanctioned by the two most powerful "of the catholic kings, and by the head of the "catholic church. It was acted upon in France "and in Holland; rewards were publicly offered "for the murder of the prince of Orange; and the "fanatics, who undertook to murder Elizabeth, "were encouraged by a plenary remission of sins, "granted for this special service."

Here, you first allude, I suppose, to the massacre on St. Bartholomew's day, ordered by Charles IX. But how can this massacre, or the murder of the prince of Orange, to which you afterwards refer, be justly imputed to any principle of the roman-catholic faith? The plea of Charles IX. was, that the admiral de Coligni and his association had been guilty of treason and rebellion, and were then actually engaged in treasonable and rebellious practices; that, by these, they deserved death as traitors; that they would have been condemned to suffer capitally, if the king had been powerful enough to bring them before a proper tribunal; and that, as this was not in his power, the circumstances of the case justified his putting them to death without a trial, by making it a necessary, and, therefore, a justifiable act of self-defence.

In this light he represented his conduct to the see of Rome, and the foreign courts. I reject the

plea as much as yourself; but is it surprising that, in the state of ferment and exaltation in which all minds then were, the plea should have been received by several? Still,—how does this prove the principle of assassination to be a tenet of the roman-catholic church? In my last chapter I shall mention the order given by the episcopalian government of Scotland, for the general massacre of the non-conforming presbyterians. Does this,—does the massacre at Glenco, the massacre at Munster, the assassination of cardinal Beaton, or the assassination of archbishop Sharp, or the assassination of Francis duke of Guise, prove the principle of assassination to be a tenet of the protestant faith? Far from me and mine be the weakness that receives such an argument; or the wickedness, that, rejecting it themselves, would wish to have it accredited by others. You remember the magnanimous speech of the duke of Guise to his huguenot assassin: "Your religion taught you to murder me; mine "teaches me to pardon you."

With respect to the murder of the prince of Orange:—that has nothing in common with assassination in the ordinary acceptation of that word. The prince had been tried as a rebel, and condemned for contumacy. If he had professed the catholic religion, and conducted himself in the manner he had done towards a protestant sovereign, would not this have been the case in every protestant state? The consequence was, that an

order, (very usual in such cases, in the states on the Continent), was issued, through all the Spanish dominions, offering a reward to any one who should execute the sentence.—What has this, I again ask, in common with the principle of assassination?

You say, that "the fanatics, who undertook to "murder Elizabeth, were encouraged by a plenary "remission of sins, granted for this special ser-"vice." I deny the fact explicitly; I call upon you to mention the names of those fanatics, or the name of any one of them, and to produce evidence of the grant of the remission of their sins. If you have in view cardinal Como's letter to Parry, read it and his trial; then tell me candidly, whether you think that Parry produced the slightest evidence, from which it could be reasonably inferred, that either the pope or the cardinal was aware of any project of assassinating Elizabeth? I beg leave to refer you to what I have written on this subject, in the "Historical Memoirs of the "English, Irish and Scottish Catholics*."

In further proof of your charge of assassination, you inform us, that "Father Campian, in an "oration delivered at Douay, said: As far as con-"cerns the jesuits, we all,—dispersed in great num-"bers throughout the world,—have made a league "and holy oath, that, as long as any of us are alive, "all our care and industry, all our deliberations "and councils, shall never cease to trouble your "calm and safety." Permit me to observe to you,

* Chapter XXXII, sect. 5.

that the document to which you refer, is not an oration delivered at Douay, but, as it is justly styled by Strype, "Campian's letter to the privy "council, offering to avow and prove his catholic "religion before all the doctors and masters of "both universities, and requiring a disputation." This circumstance alone makes some difference;—but it is more important, that the words, "to "trouble your calm and safety," are an absolute interpolation. They do not occur in Strype *, or in doctor Bridgewater's version of the letter: "*Omnes nos qui sumus de Societate Jesu per "totum terrarum orbem, longè lateque diffusi, "sanctum fœdus inesse, ut curas quam nobis injecistis, magno animo feramus, neque unquam de "vestrâ salute desperemus, quamdiu vel unus quisquam de nobis superest, qui Tyburno vestro "fruatur, atque suppliciis vestris excarnificari, "carceribusque squalere et consumi possit†.*"

* Strype's Annals, III. App. 6.

† "Epistola Edmundi Campioni, sacerdotis Societatis Jesu, "ad Reginæ Angliæ Consiliarios, quæ profectiones suæ in "Angliam, institutum declarat, et adversarios in certamen "provocat, ex Anglico sermone Latine tradita." Bridgewater's Concertatio, p. 1, 2.

XV. 4.

Justification of the Persecutions, on the ground of the traitorous Principles of the Foreign Seminarists, and the general Disloyalty of the Roman-catholics.

From the beginning of the reign of queen Elizabeth, until even the thirty-first year of the reign of his late majesty, no school, for the education of catholic youth in catholic principles, could be supported, without exposing both the masters and the scholars to the very heavy penalties of forfeiture of goods and chattels, with one year's imprisonment, for the first offence; to the penalties of a premunire for the second; and to death for the third. This made it absolutely necessary to establish foreign seminaries for educating persons for the sacred ministry.

You consider them as seminaries of disloyalty. Mr. Hume avers, in still stronger language, that "sedition, rebellion, sometimes assassination, were "the expedients by which the seminarists intended "to effect their purpose against their queen." To these atrocious charges, seven unquestionable facts may be opposed:—1. that, of two hundred catholics who suffered for their religion in the reign of queen Elizabeth, *one* only impugned her title to the crown: 2. that they all, to the instant of their deaths, persisted in the most solemn and explicit denial of every

legal guilt, except the mere exercise of their functions: 3. that their accusers were uniformly persons of bad lives, and of the lowest character: 4. that there is not one instance, in which the tortures inflicted on them produced, either a confession of his own guilt, or a charge of guilt on others: 5. that the barbarous irregularity with which their trials were conducted has seldom been equalled: 6. that even this irregularity never furnished legal evidence of their commission of any legal treason, except, as we have already noticed, a mere exercise of missionary functions: 7, and that even this was seldom proved upon them by competent evidence. The perusal of their trials will convince you of the truth of these assertions.

To what we have said, we should add the most solemn asseverations of doctor Allen, in his "True "and modest Defence of the English Catholics "against a libel, intitled, the Execution of Justice "in England,—that all conversations on subjects "of state or policy, were strictly prohibited to the "students in the foreign seminaries, and that they "were enjoined to abstain from them, and from "all interference in secular concerns, when they "should be employed in the English mission."

I now request your candid opinion, whether you think there is any ground for your charge of disloyalty against the seminarists?

Permit me to add, that this completely repels your accusation, that the priests were executed for

treason. That expression conveys an idea, that the treason upon which the missionaries suffered, was some act made treasonable by the antient law of the land, or by the statute of 25 of Edward III. commonly called "the Statute of Treasons." Your readers certainly understand your expression in this sense; but not one of the missionary priests suffered for any act of this description. The only acts for which they suffered were those, which the statutes of Elizabeth had made treasonable,—as, denying her spiritual authority, remaining in or returning to England, or some other spiritual observance. Now, if the priests had not remained in or returned to England, the English roman-catholics would have been without instruction, without the sacraments, and without the rites of their church. To remain in, or return to England was, therefore, the duty of the catholic priesthood; and for some act of this religious duty,—but for no act of any other kind,—were they executed. Thus, if you say they were hanged and embowelled, not for being priests, but for being traitors, then, as their being priests was the sole cause of their being traitors, they were, in truth, hanged and embowelled for being priests*.

* This is sir Walter Scott's judicious observation, in his edition of Dryden's works, vol. 3, p. 237, note xv.

The justice of the execution of the priests, on the ground suggested in the text, was asserted by lord Burghley in a state paper, published by him in 1583, intitled, "The Execution of Justice," inserted in the Harleian Collection. To this, cardinal Allen triumphantly replied, by his "True,

XV. 5.

Justification of the Persecution of the Roman-catholics in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, on the ground of the persecuting Principles and Practices of their Church.

On this subject you write with great strength and eloquence, but without citing any authority. This defect I will supply, by confessing that the roman-catholics have sometimes been guilty of the crime, (for such I deem it), of religious persecution. But did not justice and candour require of you to admit the equal guilt, in this respect, of protestants? Have not the protestants persecuted the roman-catholics, and even their fellow protestants, in every country in which they have obtained the ascendancy, as in Germany, Switzerland, Geneva, France, Holland, Sweden, Scotland and England? You mention the sanguinary executions of protestants in the Low-Countries, by the order of the merciless duke of Alva; these I reprobate as much as yourself; but why are you silent on the executions, equally, and I believe, more sanguinary, of the roman-catholics by the order of Vandermerck and Sonoi in Belgium and Holland? or on the persecuting deeds and writings of Calvin, Beza and other reformers? You mention the massacre on St. Bartholomew's day:

" sincere and modest Defence of Christian Catholics." The cardinal's publication was universally read and admired. The style is admirable: the learned Edmund Bolton called it, " A princely, grave and flourishing piece of natural and " exquisite English."

—It is not to be justified, and not much to be extenuated; but I agree with doctor Lingard, that it was not, as it has been generally represented, a work of long premeditation. It certainly had been preceded by the massacres perpetrated in France by the calvinists upon the catholics, and their repeated burnings of churches and monasteries. Doctor Heylin* mentions the calvinistic massacres of the catholic priests at Pamiers, Montauban, Rodez and other places. Why did you not mention these? Why were you silent on the cruelties exercised by the protestant episcopalians on the Scottish presbyterians, throughout the reign of Charles II., notwithstanding his solemn promise of toleration at Breda? Can you read without horror Mr. Laing's account of them? Or can you read without compunction the sufferings of the English protestant non-conformists in the same reign? In the preface to De Laune's "Plea for Non-conformists," it is said that 8,000 of them perished in this persecution. Perhaps, when you read Mr. Laing's account † of "the treachery, and almost unexampled perjuries of "the first ministers of the church and state of Scot-"land,"—and of "the absolute and undistin-"guished massacre *voted* by the privy council," and "of the warrant for it signed by the king," and of "the execution of it,—not inferior to the spirit "by which it was dictated,"—you may think that

* Vol. 27, p. 163.

† Laing, vol. 2, p. 83. 151.—and through the whole of book VII. & VIII. of his history.

the catholic massacre on St. Bartholomew's day has been equalled by more than one protestant enormity.

I beg leave to ask you, whether you think it consistent with historic impartiality, to keep out of sight the outrages committed by protestants, while you bring forward, in the most glowing language, those committed by the roman-catholics? Read doctor Milner's "fourth letter to doctor Sturges," his forty-ninth letter in his "End of Controversy," his "twenty-second letter to Mr. Grier," and the excellent letter in the "Edinburgh Review" on the toleration of the first reformers; then let me adjure you, as a christian and a gentleman, to say on which side the balance of religious persecution lies,—the catholic or the protestant? Or what better reason there is to ascribe catholic persecutions to the catholic religion, than to ascribe protestant persecutions to the protestant?—Pardon me the solemnity of this address: it is known that nothing tends to prejudice the public mind in this country against the roman-catholics, so much as making it believed that the lawfulness, and even the duty of religious persecution, is one of the tenets of their creed. To this accusation, all who wish us evil never fail to resort. That you, a man of real learning, should attack us with such a weapon, gives me surprise and sorrow.

But, Sir,—for the subject is so serious that I cannot yet quit it,—if you are not convinced that you share the guilt of religious persecution, at least

equally with us, turn your eyes westward, and contemplate IRELAND!!!

There,—you will see a people to whom Nature has been profusely kind. She has blessed them with the most genial climate, the most fertile soil, the boldest coasts, the most navigable rivers; with strength, industry, energy, virtue and talent! With all these blessings, they have, for three hundred years, been the most miserable nation in the habitable globe; and present, at this moment, a scene of appalling wretchedness;—a wretchedness so bitter, so deep, and so extensive, that even the enemies of their name shudder at beholding it; but, at the same time, a wretchedness formed by the original artificers of it with such fiendish skill and contrivance, that it seems almost beyond human ability to remove it. To what is this owing? Let lord chancellor Clare answer in his own words,—"The division of Ireland," says his lordship, "between those who adhered to the catholic, and "those who adhered to the protestant religion, is "*the grand schism, which has been the bane and* "*pestilence of Ireland, and rendered her a* BLANK "*among the nations of Europe.*"

Mentioning the persecutions of queen Elizabeth, you assert, that "no church, no sect, no individual "even, had yet professed the principle of toleration." Now it had been repeatedly professed by writers of the roman-catholic church: Sir Thomas More had established it in Utopia; the fourth council of Toledo had declared, that "it was unlawful and

" unchristianlike to force people to believe, seeing " it is God alone who hardens and shows mercy to " whom he will."—" Neither saint Ambrose, nor " saint Martin," says Mr. Alban Butler, in his lives of those great men, " would communicate with " Ithacius, or those bishops who held communion " with him, because they sought to put heretics to " death.—Saint Martin besought Maximus not to " spill the blood of the guilty; saying, it was suf- " ficient that they had been declared heretics, and " excommunicated by the bishops; and that there " was no precedent of an ecclesiastical cause being " brought before the secular judge."

In all these instances, was not the true principle of religious toleration professed? Were not those, who thus professed it, roman-catholics?

The doctrine of religious toleration is now so generally admitted, at least in theory, that it surprises me to find a person, who openly professes the doctrine of religious intolerance. Yet such persons are sometimes met with. *Bishop Sparke*, addressing himself to the synod of Canterbury, in July 1807, denounced "the roman-catholics,"—who form at least one fourth of the population of the empire,—" as enemies of all laws, divine and " human, and who, as such, should be *driven from* " *our courts and armies.*" *You*, in the chapter now before me, eulogize the celebrated John Fox; you call him "the good old martyrologist;" you mention him as the only person who raised his voice against queen Elizabeth's persecution of the

anabaptists. But, what was the persecution against which he raised his voice? "There is," (I transcribe your own citation of his words,) "There is," he says, "imprisonment, there are chains, there are "brandings and stripes, and even the gibbet: *this* "*alone* I earnestly deprecate, that you would not "suffer the fires of Smithfield, which, under happy "auspices, have slept so long, should be again re-"kindled."—Surely, "the good old martyrologist," as you call him, did not raise, in favour of toleration, his voice very high.

His "Acts and Monuments" have, from the time of their publication, been the great armory of the weapons wielded against the roman-catholics, to bring them and their religion into odium. An excellent answer to them was published by father Persons. Another, is now publishing in numbers, by Mr. William Eusebius Andrews; it shows great learning and great power of argument. It seems to be admitted, that doctor Milner triumphed in controversy with doctor Sturges; I am confident Mr. Andrews's triumph over "the good old martyrologist" will be equally complete.

XV. 6.

Justification of the Persecution of the Roman-catholics, in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, from the alleged Plots against her.

As a further excuse for the sanguinary acts of queen Elizabeth against the roman-catholics, you

mention their alleged plots against her. I have discussed this charge in "the Historical Memoirs "of the English, Irish and Scottish Roman-catholics:" I trust that I have satisfactorily shown, that there is not one which can, with any justice, be charged upon the catholics. But, if all that is said of their supposed guilt were completely true, how very small a proportion of their body would it criminate. Would it be just to implicate the universal body of the roman-catholics, consisting, at that time, of one half, probably of two thirds of the whole population of England, in the crime of twenty or thirty at the utmost of their members? Would it be allowable to attribute it to their religious principles? to assign any other excuse for it than the ordinary feelings and passions of human nature?

You produce against us the bull of Pius V. by which he affected to depose queen Elizabeth, and to absolve her subjects of their allegiance to her; and the renewal of it by Sixtus Quintus. You cannot express yourself of these transactions in stronger terms of condemnation, than I have used in "the "Historical Memoirs." With the late reverend Charles Plowden*, I have acknowledged that a few, —but only very few,—catholics, chiefly from among those who lived in exile,—were led astray by these illaudable bulls from their duty. I have also acknowledged, that the conduct of the popes, and

* Reply to the Editor of the Memoirs of Panzani.

these adherents to them, would have justified queen Elizabeth in the use of strong precautions. This is all the acknowledgment the case requires or justifies; and grieving, as I do, that there is cause for it, I make it without hesitation.

XV. 7.

The Spanish Armada.

But,—was it *kind or just in you,* to be perfectly silent on the conduct of the roman-catholics during the threatened invasion by the Spanish Armada; a conduct which does them so much honour?

Warmly attached to their faith, which had twice rescued their country from paganism; and under which, during a long series of centuries, their ancestors had enjoyed every spiritual and temporal blessing; they now beheld it proscribed; its tenets reviled, its sacred institutions abolished, its holy edifices levelled with the ground, its altars profaned; all who professed it groaning under the severest inflictions of religious persecution; imaginary plots incessantly imputed to them; the subtlest artifices used to draw them into criminal attempts; "counterfeit letters privately left in their "houses; spies sent up and down the country to "notice their discourses, and lay hold of their "words; informers and reporters of idle stories "against them countenanced and credited*;" and

* Carte's History, vol. 3, p. 585.

even "innocence itself," (to use Camden's own words), "though accompanied by prudence, no guard to them;" they had constantly before their eyes the racks and gibbets by which their priests had suffered, and they saw other racks and other gibbets preparing; they saw the presumptive heir to the crown brought to the block, because she was of their religion; and because, as she was formally told by lord Buckhurst, "the established "religion was thought not to be secure whilst she "was in being;" they knew the universal indignation which this enormity had raised in every part of Europe against their remorseless persecutor; that Pius V. the supreme head of their church, had excommunicated her, had deposed her, had absolved her subjects from their allegiance to her, and implicated them in her excommunication if they continued true to her; they knew that Sixtus, the reigning pope, had renewed the excommunication, had called on every catholic prince to execute the sentence, and that Philip II. by far the most powerful monarch of the time, had undertaken it; had lined the shores of the Continent with troops, ready, at a moment's notice, for the invasion of England; and had covered the sea with an armament, which was proclaimed to be invincible;—in this awful moment, when England stood in need of all her strength, and the slightest diversion of any part of it might have proved fatal,—the worth of a roman-catholic's conscientious loyalty was fully shown. What catholic in England did not do his duty?

Who of them forgot his allegiance to the queen? or was not eager to sacrifice his life and his whole fortune* in her cause?—"Some," says Hume, "equipped ships at their own charge, and gave the "command of them to protestants; others were "active in animating their tenants, and their vassals "and neighbours, in defence of their country:"—"Some," (says the writer of an intercepted letter, printed in the second volume of the Harleian Miscellany*), "by their letters to the council, signed "with their own hands, offered that they would "make adventures of their own lives in defence of "the queen, whom they named their undoubted "sovereign lady and queen, against all foreign "foes, though they were sent from the pope, or at "his commandment; yea, some did offer that they "would present their bodies in the foremost ranks:" Lord Montagu, a zealous catholic, and the only temporal peer who ventured to oppose the act for the queen's supremacy in the first year of her reign, brought a band of horsemen to Tilbury, commanded by himself, his son and his grandson, thus periling his whole house in the expected conflict†:—The annals of the world do not present a more glorious or a more affecting spectacle than the zeal shown on this memorable occasion, by the poor and persecuted, but loyal, but honourable catholics!—Nor should it be forgotten, that, in this account of their loyalty, all historians are agreed.

* Page 64.

† Osborn's Secret History, edit. 1811, p. 22.

Then will not you,—even YOU,—feel some indignation, when you are informed,—that this exemplary, may it not be called, heroic conduct, procured no relaxation of the laws against the catholics?—That it was followed, almost immediately, by laws still more harsh than the preceding?—That through the whole remainder of the reign of Elizabeth, the laws against the catholics continued to be executed with unabated, and even with increased rigour?—That between the defeat of the armada, and the death of Elizabeth, more than one hundred catholics were hanged and embowelled,—merely, we must repeat,—for the exercise of their religion?—and that, when some catholics presented to the queen a most dutiful and loyal address, praying, in the most humble terms, a mitigation of the laws against them, no other attention was shown it, than that Mr. Shelley, by whom it was presented to the queen, "for presuming," as it was said, "to pre-"sent an address to the queen, without the know-"ledge and consent of the lords of the council," was sent to the marshalsea, and kept a close prisoner till his death?

Surely, when you peruse this treatment of the catholics, you will feel some indignation. But do you not justly excite something of a like indignation, when, after seeing the loyalty of the catholics thus so severely tried, and thus found so eminently pure, you still continue in your prejudices, and still employ your pen in maledictions of us and our ancestors?

One of these sufferers,—father Robert Southwell, of the society of Jesus,—will, I am sure, attract your attention; for, like yourself, he knew

> "Himself to sing and build the lofty rhyme."
>
> MILTON.

His poems were printed in 1585; a selection from this edition has been lately published in a small octavo volume. Sir Egerton Bridges observes, in his *Censura Literaria*, that "a deep "moral pathos, illumined by fervent piety, marked "every thing Southwell wrote, either in prose or "verse;" and that "there is something singularly "simple, chaste, eloquent and fluent in his diction "on all occasions."

An eloquent and interesting account of his life, virtues, sufferings, trial and execution, is given by father Juvenci*. It appears by it, and by other accounts, that father Southwell was racked ten times; and sometimes, during seven hours, without intermission. He was executed on the 21st February 1595. The hangman tied the noose of the rope so unskilfully, that father Southwell, while he was hanging, made the sign of the cross several times. While he was yet alive, the hangman advanced to cut the rope, but the people withheld him three several times by their cries; for the meekness and constancy with which the good father

* Historia Societatis Jesu, lib. xiii. p. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. See Strype's Ann. vol. 4, n. lxxix; Holt's Lett. ib. 147; and Memoirs of Miss. Priests, vol. 1, p. 324.

comported himself, in his last moments, were so great, that even the protestants, who were present at the execution, were greatly affected by the sight.

A letter, written by him, gives an account of the sufferings of the catholic priests in prison, which, I am sure, must shock the feelings of every humane reader. "A little while ago," says the reverend writer, "they apprehended two priests, who have "suffered such cruel usages in the prison of Bride-"well, as can scarce be believed. What was given "them to eat was so little in quantity, and withal "so filthy and nauseous, that the very sight of it "was enough to turn their stomachs. The labours, "to which they obliged them, were continual and "immoderate, and no less in sickness than in "health; for, with hard blows and stripes, they "urged them to accomplish their tasks, how weak "soever they were. Some are there hung up "whole days by the hands, in such a manner that "they can but just touch the ground with the tips "of their toes. In fine, they that are kept in "prison truly live *in lacu miseriæ, et in luto "fæcis*, psalm 39. This purgatory we are looking "for every hour, in which Topcliffe and Young, "the two executioners of the catholics, exercise all "kinds of torments. But come what please God, "we hope we shall be able to bear all in him that "strengthens us."

This letter is dated the 16th January 1590, seventeen months after the memorable display of

catholic loyalty, while England was threatened by the invincible armada.

In 1592, a poor waterman, and a Mrs. Ward, a widow, then in the service of a catholic lady, were hanged, drawn and quartered, for assisting a catholic priest to escape from prison. Mrs. Ward had been hung up by her hands, and cruelly scourged. In 1601, Mrs. Lyne suffered the same punishment for harbouring a priest. In 1586, Mrs. Clitheroe, of the antient family of Middleton, in Yorkshire, was tried by the order of the earl of Huntingdon, the lord president of the north, for relieving a priest. She refused to plead; and, by the sentence of the court, was pressed to death. A note in doctor Lingard's history contains the following account of this severe sentence *.

"The place of execution was the tolbooth, six "or seven yards from the prison at York, on the "25th March 1586. An eye-witness gives the "following account of this cruel and unparalleled "scene. 'After she had prayed, Fawcet, one of "the sheriffs, commanded them to put off her ap- "parel; when she, with the four women, requested "him on their knees, that, for the honour of woman- "hood, this might be dispensed with; but they "would not grant it. Then she requested that "the women might unapparel her, and that they "would turn their faces from her during that time. "The women took off her cloaths, and put upon

* Vol. 5, n. (FF.), p. 667; Mem. of Miss. Priests, vol. 1, 189.

" her the long linen habit. Then, very quietly, " she laid her down upon the ground, her face " covered with a handkerchief, and most part of " her body with the habit. The door was laid " upon her; her hands she joined towards her " face. Then the sheriff said, ' Naie, ye must have " your hands bound.' Then two sergeants parted " her hands, and bound them to two posts, in the " same manner as the feet had previously been fixed. " After this they laid weight upon her, which, " when she first felt, she said, ' Jesu! Jesu! " Jesu! have mercy upon mee!' which were the " last words she was heard to speake. She was " dying about one quarter of a hower. A sharp " stone, as big as a man's fist, had been put under " her back; upon her was laid to the quantity of " seven or eight hundred weight, which, breaking " her ribs, caused them to burst forth of the skin.'"

Once more I take leave to ask you,—did not the duty of historic impartiality require of you to mention these sufferings, and this meritorious conduct of the roman-catholics?

LETTER XVI.

JAMES I.

SIR,

THE part of your chapter on the reign of James I. which relates to the roman-catholics, is extremely limited: it is confined to the Gunpowder Plot, and the Oath of Allegiance required by James from the roman-catholics; both are important, and I shall successively consider them.

XVI. 1.

The Gunpowder Plot.

JUSTICE to the roman-catholics evidently required of you, to mention their many loyal advances to king James, on his accession to the English throne; the dutiful addresses to him, both from the roman-catholic clergy, and the roman-catholic laity; and the humble supplication presented to him from the priests in exile. You should also have mentioned the communications between him and the catholics, both in the life-time of Elizabeth, and subsequently to her decease; his fair words, and even promises to them, particularly during the negotiations for the marriage of Charles, his son and successor, with the infanta of Spain; his explicit avowals, after these negotiations ceased, of his resolution to persecute the roman-catholics; and the declaration of

Bancroft, the bishop of London, that the time was come, "when the protestants might act against "the catholics without dissimulation or mercy; that "is,—exterminate them:" and the statute of the first year of his reign, which directed, that the laws against jesuits and seminary priests should be put into execution; that two-third parts of the real estates of every offender, should be seized for recusancy; and that persons educated in foreign seminaries should be incapable of taking lands by descent. Should you not have brought forward all these circumstances? Observing, as you have done, a total silence upon them, can you yourself say, that you have fairly stated their case?

You cite James for saying, that "he was but "half a king to the papists, being lord of their "bodies, while their souls were the pope's." Why should the roman-catholics be incessantly insulted by a repetition of those taunting expressions? what foundation is there for them? When all the protestant colonies in America revolted against England, catholic Canada alone preserved her allegiance to her. What would be the solitude of her camps and her armies, if the brave and loyal catholics did not fill them? Have not ministers, has not the legislature of Great Britain, repeatedly acknowledged the loyalty and worth of his majesty's roman-catholic subjects? Did not the earl of Liverpool, in the debate on the Irish petition, say,—"I have heard "allusions, this night, to doctrines which, I do "hope, no man now believes the roman-catholics to

"entertain; nor is there any ground, that the "question is opposed upon any such pretence."—This is the language of a statesman, and a gentleman.—How much better,—better in every sense of the word, is it,—than general, ungrounded, and illiberal abuse!

You proceed to the gunpowder plot:—"That "atrocious treason," you say, "was devised by a "few bigots, who had become furious, when their "hopes of bringing about a Spanish invasion were "frustrated by the peace with Spain. The English "catholics, as a body, were innocent of it; but the "opprobrium which it brought upon their church "was not unjust; because Guy Fawkes and his "associates acted upon the same principles as the "head of that church," on the occasions which you enumerate, and which we have already mentioned.

But,—how many catholics were concerned in the plot? Sixteen at the most; and nine only of these were privy to the powder part of it. In what estimation were the conductors of the plot held by the catholics? A contemporary writer * informs us, that "they were a few wicked and desperate "wretches, whom many protestants termed papists, "although the priests and true catholics knew them "not to be such; nor could any protestant say, that "any one of them was such as the law terms popish "recusants." Who revealed the conspiracy? Lord

* Protestants Plea for Priests, p. 56, published in 1621.

Mounteagle, a roman-catholic.—Who were particularly active in detecting and exposing it? The earl of Northampton and the earl of Suffolk, both roman-catholics.—If it had succeeded, and the explosion had taken place, would not many, and perhaps nearly as many, roman-catholics as protestants have perished in the ruin? As soon as the particulars of the plot became generally known, did not the catholics universally express their horror of it? Blackwell, the catholic archpriest, and the other leading clergymen, immediately circulated a pastoral letter, in which they called it "detestable and "damnable;" and assured the catholics, "that "the pope had always condemned such unlawful "practices."—They presented an address to the king, another to both houses of parliament, and a third to Cecil, the chief secretary of state, declaring in each their abhorrence of the plot, asserting their innocence, and *urging inquiry* *. Soon after the archpriest and the leading clergy had published their letter, the former received a brief from the pope to the same effect; on the receipt of it, he, with the leading clergy, announced it to the catholics, by a letter, in the same spirit as the preceding.

You say, that, "if the conspirators felt any com-"punctious scruples, the sanction of their ghostly "fathers quieted their doubts." To this, permit me to give an absolute denial. So far was it from being the case, that the histories published by More

* The Advocate of Conscience and Liberty, &c. p. 230.

and Bartoli show, that the jesuits exerted themselves to sooth the general irritation, which James's conduct had naturally occasioned. This was known so generally, that some ardent spirits insinuated, that the jesuits were leagued with government, to withhold the catholics from asserting their rights.

The rack, as usual, was resorted to.—John Owen, a servant, was put to the torture, when he was labouring under a rupture: his bowels burst; he was then removed, taken to bed, and died soon afterwards.—Father Gerard, a jesuit, without the slightest evidence of his guilt, was sent to the Tower; his hands were screwed into two iron rings, and by those he was fastened to a column, at a height that did not allow his feet to touch the ground: He was kept in this excruciating torture during one hour; a block was then placed under his feet, and he remained in that state during five more hours; he was then removed. On the next day the same torture was inflicted upon him, and he fainted from excess of pain: He was recalled to sense, by pouring vinegar down his throat, but the torture was continued: On the following day he was ordered to it for the third time, but the governor of the Tower interfered, and prevented it. He was never brought to trial, and, after some time, escaped from prison. After he had reached the Continent, he, in the most solemn manner, protested his absolute innocence of the charge.—Father Oldcorne, another jesuit, was racked five times, and upon one occasion, with particular severity, during

several hours: Not even the slightest evidence was produced of his having been concerned in the plot, or of his having been acquainted with any circumstance connected with it; he was, however, tried for misprision of treason, found guilty, hanged, cut down alive, and embowelled.—Guy Fawkes was put to the torture: By a document in the state-paper office, king James gave particular directions for the management of his torture; he desired that it might proceed from less to greater severity,—*per gradus ad ima*,—his majesty's own expression.

In respect to father Garnet's complicated and melancholy tale, a full account of it is necessary to make it understood; I must, therefore, beg leave to refer you for it, to "the Historical Memoirs of "the English, Irish and Scottish Catholics*."

But I beg leave to add, that Mr. Peel having granted me, in the most liberal manner, permission to examine the documents respecting the gunpowder conspiracy, in the state-paper office, I have availed myself of it at different times. The result of my researches has been favourable to the catholic cause: I have communicated it to doctor Lingard, and I therefore wait, with great impatience, for the next volume of his elegant, accurate, and impartial work. I must use this opportunity to thank Mr. Peel, for the free access which he gave me to the state-paper office. A roman-catholic may be permitted to wish, that his opposition to catholic eman-

* Ch. xliv. xlv. xlvi.

cipation was much less able; but he cannot wish it more honourable, or more liberal.

Whatever were the circumstances of the plot, the penal laws against the catholics were carried into execution with great severity. Eighteen priests, and seven laymen, suffered death for the mere exercise of their religion; one hundred and twenty-six priests were banished, and the heavy fine of twenty pounds was exacted, with the greatest rigour, from every catholic, who did not attend the service of the established church.

XVI. 2.

The Oath of Allegiance required by James I. from the English Roman-catholics.

You mention the beatification of father Garnet; —then inform us, that "the parliament thought "it necessary that an oath of allegiance should be "taken from every catholic;"—that the pope forbade them to take it, as being "injurious to his "authority, and destructive to their own souls;" that "it was however taken without apparent scruple "or reluctance: but that catholic writers of the "first eminence abroad maintained the papal pre-"tensions in their whole extent;" and that "the "protestants were thus confirmed in their opinion, "that the doctrine of equivocation, which was pub-"licly taught by the roman-casuists, and the belief "of the pope's absolute power, rendered it impos-

"sible to confide in the oaths of men, whose con-
"science was not in their own keeping." Permit me to say, that this representation contains many mistakes.

Father Garnet has not been beatified. Of this, catholic-writers have more than once explicitly assured the public in works of celebrity, and in considerable circulation. Perhaps you are not aware of what constitutes a *beatification*? When the canonization of any holy person is solicited, a commission is issued by the Congregation of Rites, for the purpose of ascertaining the general opinion of his sanctity and miracles. If the report of the commissioners be favourable to them, the process for the canonization is instituted: it proceeds through various stages, until it is ascertained, by the most solemn and strict proofs, that the party possessed the virtues of faith, hope and charity, in an eminent, or,—to use the language of the proceeding,—in an heroic degree; and that miracles were worked by him, or through his intercession. This proof being obtained, a consistory of cardinals is convened; a very solemn deliberation ensues; and if the consistory is of opinion that the proof required is satisfactory, the cause proceeds; and then, but not until then, the pope pronounces the party to be "among the blessed." This is termed "beatifi-
"cation." Here the process frequently stops.—A further process, in which proof of other miracles is required, leads it to *canonization*. When he is beatified, he is termed "blessed;" when he is

canonized, he is termed "sanctified," or "saint." Now, no process for the canonization of father Garnet has ever been begun; he has not therefore been beatified: it is even irregular to call him "blessed." If any roman-catholic writer has applied that epithet to him, (which I think doubtful), he unquestionably intended to use the word in its ordinary, not in its appropriate sense.

As to the oath of allegiance:—Some Transalpine divines carried their opinions in favour of the papal power so high, as to maintain that the pope possessed, by divine right, and directly, supreme power, both in temporal and spiritual concerns: others lowered this pretension considerably, by maintaining that the pope, by divine right, possessed directly no temporal power; but that, when the great good of any state, or any individual required it, he might exercise temporal power, or cause it to be exercised over that state or individual. This gave him, *indirectly*, temporal power in spiritual concerns. The latter was a general opinion of roman-catholics when James proposed his oath of allegiance; it is now abandoned in every part of the world, except the precinct within the walls of the Vatican: the English, Irish and Scottish roman-catholics have solemnly disclaimed it by their oaths.

The persons who took the oath prescribed by James I. disclaimed the pope's deposing power absolutely, and without any qualification; and abjured, "as impious and heretical, the damnable doctrine, "that princes excommunicated, or deprived by the "pope, might be deposed or murdered by their

" subjects, or any other whatsoever." The pope, by two briefs, forbade the catholics to take the oath; and there is no doubt, although he did not venture to avow it, that it was on account of its disclaimer of his deposing power.—I wish that I could say with you, that " it was taken by the catholics with- " out apparent scruple or reluctance:"—It occasioned much contention and heart-burning among them, and a fierce and long war of words ensued; ultimately, the oath was taken by the generality of the body, but it always had opponents. Nothing, however, in the dispute, warrants your charge of equivocation. Never did equivocation enter less into any conflict: nothing can be more explicit than Bellarmine's attack, or Widdrington's defence, of the oath. The Clarendon state-papers* contain a multitude of documents, which show the fairness of the proceedings on each side. I believe that the views of James himself, in proposing the oath, were kind; the views of his minister appear to me to be, at best, very doubtful.

But upon what ground do you adopt the invidious charge, " that the belief of the pope's absolute " power renders it impossible to confide in the " catholics, as their consciences were not in their " own keeping." Permit me to say, that I spurn this charge; and to assure you, that, if all the roman-catholics in the universe were polled, all the roman-catholics in the universe would spurn it. A statement of the doctrine of the roman-catholics

* Vol. 1, p. 190. And see the Historical Memoirs, c. xlvii. xlviii. lvi.

upon this head being too long for insertion in this place, I refer you for it to doctor Milner's forty-sixth letter in his "End of Controversy."

It is particularly strange that you should bring it forward in this place, as in two lines nearly preceding it, you have told us that the pope *forbade the catholics to take the oath proposed by James I, yet that they took it without apparent scruple or reluctance.* You assert, that the doctrine of equivocation was publicly taught by the catholic church: it has, on the contrary, been publicly condemned by her. Thus, when towards the end of the seventeenth century, certain loose opinions on the practice of it were found in the writings of some foreign divines, they were condemned, in the strongest terms, by a national assembly of the Gallican clergy in 1700*.

In a former page, I have cited lord Liverpool's liberal expression, that "he heard allusions that "might to doctrines which he did hope no one "then believed the catholics to entertain:" is not the passage, which I have just transcribed from your work, a melancholy proof that there was not all the ground his lordship supposed for the hope, which his own honourable mind suggested to him?

* Bausset's Hist. de Bossuet, vol. 4, liv. xi. s. 9; Histoire Générale de l'Eglise, pendant le xviii Siècle, Besançon, 1823, tom. premier, p. 362; D'Avrigni's Mem. Chronol. et Dogm. ad annum, 1700; and Picot's Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire de l'Eglise durant le xviii. Siècle, ad an. 1700. And see Mr. Alban Butler's Life of sir Toby Matthews, p. 17.

LETTER XVII.

CHARLES I.

SIR,

YOU are almost entirely silent on the condition of the roman-catholics during the reign of Charles I. —I. You should have mentioned the artifices then used to inflame the public mind against them; their sufferings and loyalty:—II. And the solemn judgment of archbishops and bishops of Ireland, against the toleration of the roman-catholic religion.

XVII. 1.

Artifices then used to inflame the Public Mind against the Roman-catholics; their Loyalty and Sufferings.

THEY were very great.—Stories, the most absurd and ridiculous, were propagated to inflame the popular spirit against them.—Reports were spread of foreign fleets threatening the coasts; of an army of papists training to the use of military weapons under ground; of a plot for blowing up the Thames, and drowning the faithful protestant city*. What should be said of the celebrated Hampden, who introduced into the house of commons a tailor

* Examination of Neale's History of the Puritans by Grey, vol. 2, p. 260.

of Cripplegate, who avowed that, walking in the fields, near a bank, he overheard, from the opposite side of it, the particulars of a plot, concerted by the priests and other papists, for a hundred and eight assassins to murder one hundred and eight leading members of parliament, at the rate of ten pounds for every lord, and of forty shillings for every commoner, so murdered? Or of the house of commons, who, upon this deposition, proceeded to the most violent measures against the catholics; and, under pretence of greater security, ordered the trainbands and militia of the kingdom to be in readiness, and placed under the command of the earl of Essex? Or of the house of lords, who adopted the tailor's report, and ordered it to be printed and circulated throughout the kingdom?

The monarch was, from nature and principle, averse to measures of cruelty and oppression; but was easily persuaded, when he thought his interest required it, to sacrifice the catholics to the fury of their enemies.

The consequences were such as might have been expected: proclamation after proclamation issued out against these unhappy victims of popular delusion; incarcerations, tortures and banishments, repeatedly followed; twenty-three priests were hanged and embowelled, and many others were condemned, and perished in prison.

As a specimen of the manner in which the executions of the priests were conducted, I shall

transcribe the account given of the execution of the reverend Mr. Hugh Green, by an eye-witness.

Upon a proclamation of Charles I. commanding all priests to depart the realm by a certain day, he went for that purpose to Lime, in Dorsetshire, and was going on board a vessel bound for France. But he was accosted by a custom-house officer, who asked him his name and business: Mr. Green freely told it him. The officer observed to him, that the day was passed; that he was not entitled to the benefit of the proclamation; and immediately caused him to be apprehended, and carried before a justice of peace. He there pleaded his good intentions of obeying the king's orders, and hoped that, as the mistake was only of a few days, advantage would not be taken of his candid, though unwary, discovery of his character. He was, however, sent to Dorchester gaol; and, after five months, was tried and condemned, as in cases of high treason, barely for being a priest.

The following account of his martyrdom is copied from Mrs. Willoughby's manuscript *:

"Upon Wednesday, upon the sentence of death "being given against him by judge Foster, he said, "*Sit nomen Domini Jesu benedictum in secula*, (may "the name of the Lord Jesus be for ever blessed). "He should have died upon Thursday; and, to that "end, the furze was carried to the hill to make the

* Doctor Challoner's Memoirs of Missionary Priests, vol. 2, p. 217.

" fire; and a great multitude of people were in the " streets, and at the gates and lanes, to see the " execution. But our great martyr did desire to " die on Friday, the which was, by a friend of his, " procured of the sheriff, though with very much " difficulty; being opposed by Millard, the master " keeper. And it was noted, that, after his sen- " tence, he never went to bed, and eat but very little, " scarce enough to sustain nature; yet he was very " cheerful, and full of courage to the last.

" Now, I beseech our Lord to put his words " into my memory, that I may expressly relate " them, for I have a great scruple to add or take " away; and, therefore, I have had the help of " a true servant of God, who was attentive at his " death; yet we, being two weak women, cannot " punctually remember all. Much admired was " his devotion: he, kneeling on the hurdle, made " his prayer, and kissed it before he lay down upon " it, and continued his prayers until he came to the " place of execution; then he was taken from the " hurdle, and stayed on the hill, a good distance " from the gallows, until three poor women were " hanged. Two of them had sent him word be- " fore, that they would die in their faith. O! what " comfort was this to God's true servant, who did " all which was possible to see and to speak with " them, but could not. Then they sent again to " desire him, that when they had made a confession " of their sinful life at the gallows, and should " give him a sign, that he then should absolve

" them; the which, with great joy on his part, " and much benefit on theirs, was performed. " They two, turning their faces towards us, and " throwing forth their arms, cried out to him, " '*God be with you sir*,' and so died; but the " third woman turned from us to the press of the " people, and so she died, her face or speech never " tending towards us.

" Now I also noted, that our martyr's charity, " in this short time of life, was not unrewarded; " for God, of his mercy, was pleased to yield him " the like comfort, by a reverend father of the " society of Jesus, who was there on horseback to " absolve him; the which, with great devotion and " reverence, taking off his cap, and lifting up his " eyes and hands to heaven, he received from " him.

" I cannot but bless God to see the magna- " nimity of these two, our holy martyr, and that " reverend father;—the one, being at the point of " death, with such comfort, as his cheerful coun- " tenance expressed, and the other not apprehend- " ing the great danger he was in, to be taken by " the rude multitude, of whom he should have " found no mercy.

" Now is our martyr brought to the foot of the " ladder by the sheriff, where, falling upon his " knees, he remained in devout prayer almost half " an hour; then he took his crucifix, and *agnus* " *Dei* from his neck, and gave them to this devout " gentlewoman, my assistant in this relation; and

" his beads he gave to another; also he gave the " master-keeper his handkerchief; and, at last of " all, to me, most unworthy, he gave his book of " litanies, &c.; also, from the gallows, he threw me " down his band, spectacles, and priest's girdle. " Then, turning himself to the people, and bless- " ing himself with the sign of the cross, he began:

" There be four principal things which all men " ought to remember,—death, judgment, heaven " and hell. Death is a horror to nature; but that, " which followeth is much more terrible, *viz.* judg- " ment, if we die not as we ought: and as we dis- " pose ourselves to good or evil in this life, so shall " the measures of our punishment or glory succeed. " I am here condemned to die for my religion, and " for being a priest: We know there must be " priests; for God, foretelling of the church by " the prophets, saith, ' *Thou art a priest for* " *ever, according to the order of Melchizedek,*' " (Psal. cx.) ' *And from the rising of the sun,* " *unto the going down thereof, there shall be a* " *clean sacrifice offered in my name,*' (Malachi i.) " Now, four things are to be considered,—a God, " a sacrifice, a priest, a man. God must be served " by sacrifice; this sacrifice must be offered by a " priest; and this priest must be a man. Such " am I, and therefore I must die. Wherefore do " we receive holy unction, and are made priests, " but to offer sacrifices to God? But I am con- " demned for being *ordered by the see of Rome.* " *St. Paul* saith, ' *the Romans have the catholic*

"*faith*,' (Rom. i. &c.) and gives God thanks that "their faith and his were one; of which catholic "faith I am. Against this *Roman* faith all the "sectaries cried out; and all heretics, that have "been since Christ, oppugn this faith, and yet "truly out of it none can be saved.

"There be four things more,—one God, one "faith, one baptism, one church. That there is "one God we all acknowledge; in whom, from "whom, and by whom, all things remain and have "their being. That there is one faith appears by "Christ praying that saint Peter's faith, (he said not "faiths), should never fail; and he promised to be "with it to the end of the world. That there is "one baptism; we are all cleansed by the laver of "water in the word. That there is one church, "holy and sanctified: Does not saint Paul say, that "it is a glorious church, without spot, or wrinkle, "or any such thing? Now the marks of this church "are sanctity, unity, antiquity, universality, which "all of *us*, in *all* points of faith, believe. (Here all "the ministers interrupted him, and would have "disputed with him; but he said he had been five "months in prison, and in all that time not any of "them had come to dispute with him: there, he "would not have refused any of them; but now, "that his time was too short for disputation. So "he went on). But some will say, *We are fallen "off from* the church of Rome; but in what pope's "time, in what prince's reign, or what are the "errors, none can discover. No! this holy church

" of Christ did never err. We have often offered " public disputation, but it would never be accepted. " No! this church can never be impeached of false- " hood in matters of doctrine; though scholars in " school-points may differ, but never in points of " faith. God is the author of all truth, and He " hath promised to be with it even to the consum- " mation of the world, (St. Matth. xxviii), until " we meet all in the unity of faith, and knowledge " of the Son of God, to the end we be not carried " away with every blast of doctrine; because many " heresies have risen, with diversities of doctrine, " to oppugn the truth of God's church, as hereto- " fore, Arius, Nestorius, Wickliffe, and others: " so now, in these our latter times, *Luther*, *Cal-* " *vin*, *Zuingle* and the rest, whose doctrines, at " this time, have so inveigled the judgments of this " kingdom; for God cannot be divided, nor served " in many faiths. And although there have been " heretics, yet this roman church resisted, con- " founded, and condemned all heresies. And " Luther himself confesses, that his religion was " not begun by God, neither should it be ended " by God.

" Here a minister, (one Banker,—some say it " was the minister who formerly had been a weaver, " and now is chaplain to sir Thomas Trencher), cried " out, with a loud voice, *He blasphemeth! stop that* " *mouth of the blasphemer*; *cast him off the lad-* " *der*: and so much noise was made by the multi-

" tude; and the sheriff, to quiet the people, desired " our martyr to leave off that discourse; and silence " being made,—I truly pity our poor country, said " he, with all my heart, to see what divisions are in " it, and in religion no unity among you. Then he " began to pray heartily for his majesty, and that " this kingdom might be settled in peace; the " which, he said, would never be, until there was " unity of religion amongst them.

" Then he said,—I am brought hither for a " priest and a traitor. That I am a priest I have " confessed, and, as such, ought to have left my " country, in obedience to his majesty's proclama- " tion: I went to receive that benefit for my " passage, but was refused and taken, upon pretence " of some few days past beyond the limitation of " the aforesaid proclamation, and brought to Dor- " chester prison, and am now, *for no other cause*, " (I thank God), *than for being a priest, to die*, and " not for any treason to my king or country; for " I protest, before Almighty God, I never wished " hurt to my king or country in my life; but " I prayed for his majesty, and every day in my " *memento*, at the holy mass, I offered and recom- " mended him to God. But there were laws made " in queen Elizabeth's days, by which it was made " treason to be a priest: by this law I am con- " demned for a traitor. But surely, the antient " laws of this kingdom would never have done " it as the modern doth. And now, judge you

"whether the laws, so lately made by men, be "sufficient to overthrow the authority of God's "church, and to condemn the professors of it.

"Nevertheless, I forgive all the world from my "heart, and all those who have had a hand in my "death; and I beseech you all, if I have offended "any of you in any thing, that you will every one "forgive me. I have not had a purpose to give "offence to any of you; and I pray God give you "all his grace to seek him so, as you may be made "able to attain his mercy and eternal glory.

"Then he called to me, and desired me to "commend him heartily to all his fellow-prisoners "and to all his friends. I told him I would; and "that some of them were gone before him, and "with joy expected him. Then, on my knees, "I humbly begged his benediction; so did five "more of *us*; and he cheerfully gave us his "blessing, making the sign of the holy cross "over our heads. Then one *Gilbert Loder*, an "attorney, asked him, if he did not deserve death, "and believe his death to be just? To which he "replied, My death is unjust.—So pulling his cap "over his face, his hands joined before his breast, "in silent prayer, he expected, almost half an hour, "his happy passage, by the turning of the ladder, "for not any one would put a hand to turn it, al- "though the sheriff had spoken to many. I heard "one bid him do it himself. At length, he got a "country clown, who presently, with the help of "the hangman, (who sat astride on the gallows),

" turned the ladder, which being done, he was
" noted, by myself and others, to cross himself
" three times with his right hand, as he hanged;
" but instantly the hangman was commanded to
" cut him down with a knife, which the con-
" stable held up to him, stuck in a long stick,
" although I and others did our uttermost to have
" hindered him. Now the fall which he had from
" the gallows, not his hanging, did a little astonish
" him; for that they had willed the hangman to
" put the knot of the rope at his poll, and not
" under his ear, as is usual. The man that was to
" quarter him was a timorous, unskilful man, by
" trade a barber, and his name was *Barefoot*,
" whose mother, sisters and brothers are devout
" catholics. He was so long dismembering him,
" that he came to his perfect senses, and sat up-
" right, and took *Barefoot* by the hand to show,
" (as I believe), that he forgave him; but the peo-
" ple pulled him down with the rope which was
" about his neck. Then did this butcher cut his
" belly on both sides, and turned the flap upon his
" breast, which the holy man feeling, put his left
" hand upon his bowels, and looking on his bloody
" hand, laid it down by his side; and lifting up his
" right hand, he crossed himself, saying, three
" times, *Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, mercy!*—the which,
" although I am unworthy, I am a witness, for my
" hand was on his forehead, and many protestants
" heard him, and took great notice of it; for all
" the catholics were pressed away by the unruly

" multitude, except myself, who never left him until " his head was severed from his body. Whilst he " was thus calling upon Jesus, the butcher did pull " a piece of his liver out, instead of his heart, and " tumbling his guts out every way, to see if his " heart were not amongst them; then, with his " knife, he raked in the body of this most blessed " martyr, who even then called upon Jesus, and " his forehead sweat; then was it cold, and pre- " sently again it burned; his eyes, nose and mouth, " ran over with blood and water. His patience " was admirable; and when his tongue could no " longer pronounce that life-giving name, *Jesus*, " his lips moved, and his inward groans gave signs of " those lamentable torments, which, for more than " half an hour, he suffered. Methought my heart " was pulled out of my body to see him in such " cruel pains, lifting up his eyes to heaven, and not " yet dead. Then I could no longer hold, but " cried *out upon them, that did so torment him*; " upon which, a devout gentlewoman, understand- " ing he did yet live, went to *Cancola*, the sheriff, " who was her uncle's steward, and, on her knees, " besought him to see justice done, and put him " out of his pains; who, at her request, commanded " to cut off his head: Then, with a knife they did " cut his throat, and with a cleaver chopped off his " head; and so this thrice most blessed martyr " died. Then was his heart found, and put upon " a spear, and showed to the people, and so thrown " down into the fire, which was on the side of a hill.

"They say, this heart did roll from the fire, and "that a woman did take it up, and carry it away: "this I speak not of my knowledge, but what is "here reported to be true, and it may be very pro- "bable, because the hill is steep and uneven, and "the heart not thrown as usually but from the point "of a long spear. Then did this gentlewoman "and myself go to the sheriff, and beg his body, "the which he freely gave us. Now did the devil "roar, and his instruments, the blinded Dorces- "trians, (whom with my soul I deplored), did fret "and chafe, and told the sheriff that he could not "dispose of his quarters to papists, neither should "we have them. And truly, I believe, that if we "should have offered to carry them away, they "would have thrown both the body and us into the "fire; for our number was but small, and they "many thousands. Their fury did so rage against "us, that we were forced to withdraw ourselves; "and had I not procured the master-keeper's wife "to have gone back with us to the town, they had "stoned us, or done us worse harm, as I was told "by many credible people; so great is their "malice to catholics. God, in his mercy, pardon "and convert them! From the town we sent "a shroud, by a protestant woman, to wrap his "happy quarters in, whom, it seems, God did send, "as on purpose, to do this last office unto his ser- "vant; for to us all she was a stranger, and lives "twelve miles from the town. And when she "heard us mourn that none of us durst appear, she

" with a courage went and saw his quarters put
" into the shroud, and buried them near to the
" gallows, although she suffered many affronts from
" the ungodly multitudes, who, from ten o'clock
" in the morning till four in the afternoon, staid
" on the hill and sported themselves at football with
" his head, and put sticks in his eyes, ears, nose
" and mouth, and then they buried it near to the
" body; for they durst not set it upon their gates,
" because the last before, which was long since
" martyred amongst them, (Mr. John Cornelius
" Mohun, A. D. 1594), they set up his head upon
" their town gate, and presently there ensued a
" plague, which cost many of them their lives: so
" that still they fear, yet will not amend. God
" hold his merciful hand over them! or else, I fear,
" a severe judgment will befal them for this their
" last inhuman cruelty. I wish the contrary; and
" heartily pray, that we may all partake of the
" prayers and sufferings of this our holy martyr,
" whose magnanimity and patience were to me both
" admirable and profitable. And well did one
" minister say, who was present at his death,
" amongst forty more of his coat, that if many such
" men should die, and be suffered to speak as he
" did, they should soon shut up their books. This
" is credible, though, for some respects, the man
" is not named.— Sir, This briefly is what I con-
" ceived myself obliged to signify unto you con-
" cerning this subject, not doubting but you will

" conceive the same comfort in reading it, as I did " in writing the same unto you, who am, Sir, &c.

" *E. Willoughby.*"

" The same account was not long after published, " in print, by Chifletius, in his ' Palmæ Cleri " Anglicani;' and the substance of it is found in " the ' *Douay Diary*,' 1642.

" Mr. Green suffered at Dorchester, on Friday " the 19th of August 1642, in the 57th year of " his age."

From the commencement of the reign of Elizabeth, till the time of which we are now writing, attempts were unceasingly made to fix on the English catholics the odious charge of disloyalty. Charles I. knew it to be wholly groundless; but too often acted as if he believed it:—undeviatingly, however, the catholics persevered in duty and loyalty.

Soon after the commencement of the contest between the monarch and his parliament, the latter obtained the command of the public money. From this time, the wants of the king were entirely supplied from the private purses of his loyal subjects. The catholics contributed largely to them by voluntary subscriptions, and, on several occasions, by advancing to him two or more years of their annual assessments or compositions for recusancy: and, " no sooner was the standard of loyalty erected," says doctor Milner *, " and permission given for

* Letters to a Prebendary, letter VII.

"catholics to serve under it, than the whole no-
"bility of that communion, the Winchesters, the
"Worcesters, the Dunbars, the Bellamonts, the
"Carnarvons, the Powises, the Arundells, the Fau-
"conbergs, the Molineuxes, the Cottingtons, the
"Mounteagles, the Langdales, &c. &c. with an
"equal proportion of catholic gentry and yeomanry,
"were seen flocking round it, impatient to wash
"away, with their blood, the stain of disloyalty,
"which they had been unjustly constrained to suffer
"during the greater part of a century,—that is, ever
"since the accession of Elizabeth. Those catholics
"who were possessed of castles and strong holds,
"turned them into royal fortresses; and the rest of
"them raised what money their estates could afford
"in support of the king and constitution. We
"may judge of their exertions in this cause, by
"their sufferings in it."—Mr. Dodd* refers to a list before him,—(and confirmed by authentic documents),—of six lieutenant-generals, eighteen colonels, sixteen lieutenant-colonels, sixteen majors, sixty-nine captains, fourteen lieutenants, five cornets, fifty gentlemen volunteers, all catholics, who lost their lives, fighting in the field for the royal cause. The whole amount of noblemen and gentlemen, who thus perished on the side of the king, was estimated at five hundred; nearly two-fifths of them were catholics;—and this considerably exceeded the proportion, which the number of the

* Hist. vol. 3, part vi. art. 5.

catholics were at this time to that of the protestants, of the same rank in society.

Several contemporary writers, among the protestants, did justice to the conduct of the catholics: "It is a truth beyond all question," says doctor Stanhope, "that there were a great many noble, "brave and loyal spirits of the roman-catholic per- "suasion, who did, with the greatest integrity, and "without any other design than satisfying con- "science, adventure their lives in the war for the "king's service;" and that "several, if not all "of these men, were of such souls, that the greatest "temptation in the world would not have prevented "or made them desert their king in his greatest "miseries*."—"The English papist," says another writer†, "for his courage and loyalty in the first "war, deserves to be recorded in history; and per- "haps this may be worthy of notice,—that, when- "ever the usurper, or any of his instruments of "blood or sycophancy, resolved to take away the "life or estate of a papist, it was his loyalty, not "his religion, that exposed him to their rapine and "butchery."

Other protestants have not done so much justice to the catholics: perhaps you will be of opinion, that lord Clarendon should have said more of their

* The surest Establishment of the Throne, p. 30, cited by Dodd, vol. 3, p. 31.

† State of Christianity in England, by a protestant clergyman, said to be a bishop, p. 25; also cited by Dodd, in the place referred to.

fidelity to Charles II. after the defeat of the royal army at Worcester,—than that "it must never be "denied, that some of their religion had a great "share in his majesty's preservation,"—when you are informed, that, during the six first days after that disaster, his majesty was wholly in the hands and under the protection of the catholics. Fifty-two of that religion were apprised of the secret: some of these were in low circumstances; but neither fear nor hope induced even one of them to swerve from his fidelity. On the sixth day his majesty reached the house of Mr. Lane; from this time, he was in the hands of protestants, who served him with equal fidelity. In their praise, the noble historian is minute and eloquent; but of the fifty-two loyal catholics, he mentions only father Huddlestone, a benedictine monk*. It should be added, that, at the time of the death of Charles I. the Irish catholics were the only compact body, throughout the extent of the British empire, which had preserved, untainted and unshaken, their loyalty to the royal cause †.

Much of the landed property of the roman-

* See Dodd's Hist. vol. 3, part VII, book 1, art. 1. From a manuscript signed by father Huddlestone and by Mr. Whitgrave of Moseley, at whose house the monarch was concealed two days and two nights, Mr. Dodd gives the particulars of the monarch's wanderings which followed the battle, and the names of the fifty-two catholics entrusted with the secret.

† See Mr. Plowden's *Historical Review of the State of Ireland*, an able and instructive work, vol. 1, c. 4.

catholics was confiscated: it would not be estimating the amount of it too high to assert, that the adherence of the roman-catholics of England to Charles I. and his son, cost them one-third, at least, of their real, and one-half, at least, of their personal estates.

Thirteen priests suffered for their religion during the reign of Charles I.; eleven under the Usurpation; and, during the last period, further severities were inflicted on the roman-catholics.

XVII. 2.

Solemn Judgment of Archbishops and Bishops of Ireland, against the Toleration of the Roman-catholic Religion.

A FAIRER, a more learned, or a more honourable name than that of archbishop Usher, the church of England cannot produce:—yet, did this venerable man, with a file of musketeers, enter the catholic chapel in Cork-street, Dublin, during the celebration of divine service, seize the priest in his vestments, and hew down the crucifix:—yet, did this venerable man, with eleven other Irish prelates, sign what is termed, "*The judgment of diverse of* "*the archbishops and bishops of Ireland on the* "*toleration of religion*;"—and declare by it, "that "the religion of the papists was superstitious and "idolatrous; their faith and doctrine erroneous "and heretical; their church, in respect to both, "apostatical; that to give them, therefore, a tole-

" ration, or to consent that they may freely exer-
" cise their religion, is a grievous sin."—It is observable too *, that this took place at a time when Charles I. was in his greatest distress; and the catholics of Ireland were straining every nerve to serve him.

I beg of you to observe, that, in this solemn doctrinal judgment of the Irish prelacy, nothing is said, nothing is insinuated respecting the conduct, the civil principles, or even the civil tendency of the religious principles of the roman-catholics, or their religion. Toleration is denied to them wholly, and merely, for their religion; for the heresy and errors of their faith and doctrine, and for the apostacy of their church:—Upon these accounts, and upon these accounts only, " a grant of toleration to their " religion" is declared " to be a sin." . . .

Here then I take my stand:—I call upon you to consider all you have heard or read of the history of the roman-catholic church, in any age, or in any country;—I desire you to place before you all that the most intolerant roman-catholics have said or written;—I then defy you to produce one single instance, in which the detestable dogma of religious intolerance has been more explicitly, solemnly, or unqualifiedly propounded. . . .

Should it then be attributed to protestants as a tenet of their creed? . . . This,—I do not say:—But I do say,—that, if it should *not* be attributed

* See Plowden's *Historical Review of the State of Ireland*, vol. 1, c. 4; an able and instructive work.

to the protestant church, no intolerant deed or doctrine of roman-catholic individuals, however eminent in rank or character, should be attributed to the roman-catholic church.

Surely the archbishop must have forgotten the just rebuke, which, not long before this time, he himself had given to a clergyman for a want of charity. Being wrecked on a desolate part of the Irish coast, he applied to a clergyman for relief; and stated, without mentioning his name or rank, his own sacred profession. The clergyman rudely questioned it, and told him peevishly, that "he doubted whether he knew the number of the "commandments." "Indeed I do," replied the archbishop mildly, "there are eleven." "Eleven!" said the clergyman, "tell me the eleventh, and "I will assist you." "Obey the eleventh," said the archbishop, "and you certainly will.—"A new "commandment I give unto you,—that ye love "one another."

LETTER XVIII.

CHARLES II.

SIR,

FOR some passages in the chapter of your work at which I am now arrived, you have my sincere thanks; to others, I object. The principal of these I shall now proceed to mention:—I. I shall first notice your defence of Charles II.'s violation of his promise at Bréda to the roman-catholics and the protestant dissenters. In a note I shall show a near resemblance between this conduct of Charles, and the conduct of the British government towards the Irish roman-catholics at the time of the Union:—II. I shall then shortly advert to some of your criminations of the roman-catholics in your present chapter:—III. Then, briefly notice the Corporation and Test Acts:—IV. Then, suggest to you some considerations on the act of the thirtieth of Charles II. which disables roman-catholic peers and commoners from sitting and voting in parliament:—V. Then, mention Oates's plot:—VI. Then, notice James II. the Bill of Rights, and the Acts of Settlement:—VII. Then, conclude my letter, with some observations upon your repeated charges against us of superstition and Idolatry.

XVIII. 1.

Doctor Southey's Defence of Charles II.'s Violation of his Promise, at Breda, to the Roman-catholics and Protestant Dissenters.

PERMIT me to mention, that I have read with surprise this defence. "A fair promise,"—I copy your own words,—"was held forth, in the declara-"tion, that the most conciliatory measures should "be pursued." It was then said,—"because the "passions and uncharitableness of the times have "produced several opinions in religion, by which "men were engaged in parties and animosities "against each other, which, when they shall here-"after meet in a freedom of conversation, will be "composed or better understood, we do declare "a liberty to tender consciences; and that no man "shall be disquieted or called in question for dif-"ference of opinion in matters of religion, which "do not disturb the peace of the kingdom; and "that we shall be ready to consent to such an act "of parliament, as, upon mature deliberation, shall "be offered to or for the full granting that indul-"gence."

You say, that "Charles was sincere in this pro-"mise: that it arose from a just and honourable "sentiment of shame, that laws so severe against "the roman-catholics should continue to exist, "after the political necessity for them had ceased."

—"But Charles,"—you afterwards say,—"did "not think himself bound by his declaration from "Breda, to say any thing more upon the subject of "religion, than to pass such an act as the parlia- "ment might think proper to offer."—None was offered, and Charles was, therefore, in your opinion altogether unaffected by his promise.

But, was the promise thus understood at Breda? Could the catholics, so much of whose blood had been spilt, so much of whose money had been wrenched from them, so many of whose estates had been confiscated in the cause of Charles's father and his own;—could the protestant dissenters, who had been so active in promoting the restoration, and, without whose conspiration, it could not have been effected;—could any of Charles's council, who knew the views, the feelings and the expectations of the parties;—could any man then acquainted with the circumstances of the case,—have put this construction upon the monarch's word? A construction under which the protestant dissenters must have remained open to the inflictions of the statutes of recusancy, and under which the roman-catholics must have continued subject to these, and also to the rack and the gibbet?

Did not the promise at Breda imply, that all the influence of government should be used in procuring such an act of parliament as it mentions? Were not all the powers of government used to the contrary? Were not new restrictions and new penalties inflicted, both upon the roman-catholics

and the protestant dissenters?—Could this be the fair construction of the act?

Unfortunately, however, it was adopted; and the monarch quietly consigned both the protestant dissenters and the roman-catholics to the subsisting pains, penalties and miseries.—In this you think him justified!

"Thus," to use the language of Hume, "all the "king's fine promises and indulgences to tender "consciences were eluded and broken! It is true "that Charles, in his declaration from Breda, had "expressed his intention to regulate that indul- "gence by the advice and authority of parliament; "but the limitation could never reasonably be ex- "tended to a total infringement of all his arrange- "ments." No one knows better than yourself that Hume's inclination led him to defend the monarch *à toute outrançe*; and that nothing short of the highest degree of glaring criminality would have induced Hume to condemn him*.

* The conduct of the British government to the Irish roman-catholics, at the time of the Union, has been said to resemble the conduct of Charles II. to the roman-catholics and protestant dissenters, after his restoration.

That a prospect of emancipation was held out to the Irish catholics, to induce them to support the government measure of the union, seems to be undeniable.

1. *When Mr. Pitt proposed the articles of union* to the house of commons, he thus expressed himself:—"No man "can say, that, in the present state of things, *and while Ireland* "*remains a separate kingdom*, full concessions can be made "to the catholics, without endangering the state, and shaking

"the constitution to the centre." Is not this saying, that, *after* the union should have taken place, full concessions to Ireland might be made without danger? Would not the catholics necessarily understand that these concessions would then be made?

2. Such was the language of the minister who proposed the union. *What is the language of the Act of the Union?* "That every one of the lords and commons of the parliament of the United Kingdom, and every member of the United Kingdom, in the first and every succeeding parliament, shall, *until the parliament of the United Kingdom otherwise provide*, take the oaths now provided to be taken." —Is not this an explicit intimation, that a change of oaths, *after the union*, in favour of the catholics was then contemplated? that a sure and certain hope of it was held out to them?

3. *How did Mr. Pitt himself understand the terms of the concessions?*—Let this be answered in his own words. When he explained the cause and motives of his memorable resignation, he thus expressed himself:—"I, and some of my colleagues in office, did feel it an incumbent duty upon us to propose a measure on the part of the government, which under the circumstances of the union, so happily effected between the two countries, we thought of great public importance, and necessary to complete the benefits likely to result from the measure. We felt this opinion so strongly, that, when we met with circumstances which rendered it impossible for us to propose it as a measure of government, we felt it equally inconsistent with our duty and our honour any longer to remain a part of government. *What may be the opinion of others, I know not; but I beg to have it understood to be a measure, which, if I had remained in government, I must have proposed.*"

Does not Mr. Pitt unequivocally avow in these words, that he was bound in honour to propose the emancipation of the catholics?

4. I shall now insert *the written communications, which,*

at the time of which we are now speaking, were made by Mr. Pitt and lord Cornwallis, and officially delivered by lord Castlereagh to doctor Troy, the catholic archbishop in Dublin.

" *Mr. Pitt to lord Cornwallis,*

" *The leading part of his majesty's ministers, finding insur-*
" *mountable obstacles to the bringing forward measures of*
" *concession to the catholic body whilst in office, have felt it*
" *impossible to continue in administration, under the inability*
" *to propose it, with the circumstances necessary to carrying*
" *the measure, with all its advantages*; and they have retired
" from his majesty's service, considering this line of conduct
" as most likely to contribute to its ultimate success. The
" catholic body will, therefore, see how much their future
" hopes must depend upon strengthening their cause by good
" conduct in the mean time: they will prudently consider
" their prospects as arising from the persons who now espouse
" their interests, and compare them with those which they
" could look to from any other quarter: *they may, with con-*
"*fidence, rely on the zealous support of all those who retire,*
" *and of many who remain in office, when it can be given with*
" *a prospect of success.* They may be assured, that Mr. Pitt
" will do his utmost to establish their cause in the public
" favour, and prepare the way for their finally attaining their
" objects; and the catholics will feel, that as Mr. Pitt could
" not concur in an hopeless attempt to force it now, that he
" must at all times repress, with the same decision as if he
" held an adverse opinion, any unconstitutional conduct in
" the catholic body.

" Under these circumstances, it cannot be doubted that
" the catholics will take the most loyal, dutiful and patient
" line of conduct; that they will not suffer themselves to be
" led into measures which can, by any construction, give a
" handle to the opposers of their wishes, either to misinterpret
" their principles, or to raise an argument for resisting their
" claims: but that, by their prudent and exemplary de-
" meanour, they will afford additional grounds to the growing

" number of their advocates, to enforce their claims on proper " occasions, until their object can be finally and advantage- " ously attained."

5. *The Sentiments of a Sincere Friend, (i. e. Marquis Cornwallis), to the Catholic Claims:*

" If the catholics should now proceed to violence, or enter- " tain any ideas of gaining their object by convulsive measures, " or forming associations with men of jacobinical principles, " they must of course lose the support and aid of those who " have sacrificed their own situations in their cause, but who " would, at the same time, feel it to be their indispensable " duty to oppose every thing tending to confusion.

" On the other hand, should the catholics be sensible of " the benefit they possess, by having *so many characters of* " *eminence pledged not to embark in the service of government,* " *except on the terms of the catholic privileges being obtained,* " it is to be hoped, that, on balancing the advantages and " disadvantages of their situation, they would prefer a quiet " and peaceable demeanour to any line of conduct of an " opposite description."

6. *In the debate, in the house of commons, on the petition of the Irish catholics, on Wednesday the 25th of May* 1808, *Mr. Elliot thus expressed himself:—*

" I do not rise for the purpose of entering into any dis- " cussion on the general topic, but in consequence of what " has fallen from my noble friend opposite, (lord Castlereagh), " merely to advert to the circumstance of the union, of which " I may be supposed to have some official knowledge; and " *the nature of the expectation held out to the catholics, in order* " *to conciliate their acquiescence in this measure.* My noble " friend has said, that no pledge was given to the catholics, " that their full emancipation was to be the immediate conse- " quence of this measure, in consideration of their support. " It is true, indeed, that no bond was given to the catholics " on that point; but there were certainly expectations, and " something like promises held out to them, *which, in my* " *mind, ought to be more binding than a bond.* And so strongly

" was this idea felt by my noble friend, and the right honour-
" able gentleman now no more, (Mr. Pitt), that they quitted
" office because they could not carry the measure; and, when
" upon Mr. Pitt's return to office, he opposed the going into
" the committee, it was not from any objection to the measure,
" but to the time."

7. Finally, *lord Castlereagh, in his admirable speech on the motion made by Mr. Grattan, in the year* 1819,—a large extract from which is inserted in the Historical Memoirs of the English, Irish and Scottish Catholics,—notices, " the " political *incorporation of catholics and protestants*, which, " upon certain principles, was in contemplation by Mr. Pitt " and those who acted with him at the time of the union."

XVIII. 2.

Doctor Southey's Criminations of the Roman-catholics in his present Chapter.

1. " It was believed," as you inform us, " that " the late troubles,"—(meaning the grand rebellion and the usurpation),—" had been insidiously " fomented by romish agents, with a view of pro- " moting the romish cause." What evidence have you brought to substantiate these horrid suggestions?—suggestions completely destitute of probability, and flatly contradicted by the long preceding sufferings, and heroic exertions of the roman-catholics, in the royal cause.

2. " It was then certain," you say, " that *the* " *catholics had profited by the late troubles, and* " *had made more converts than in any former* " *generation.*" What! profited by the parliamentary sequestrations of two-thirds of their property!

You must admit, that this was an extraordinary species of profit. As to their success in making converts,—I call upon you to prove the fact; it is diametrically contrary to all I have seen, heard, or read.

3. You then mention, that "the catholics re-"viled the *Marian* martyrs in a strain which "showed how willingly they would have com-"menced another persecution." To me this is altogether new, and I believe it wholly unfounded; but I beg leave to observe to you, that some of the Lutheran protestants spoke of the suffering Marians in very contumelious terms. Doctor Maclaine* informs us, that they proceeded so far as to call them "the devil's martyrs."

4. You say, that "*the catholics had slighted the* "*king in his exile.*" I am aware that this is intimated by lord Clarendon; but does he mention a single instance in which they conducted themselves in this manner? or a single fact which proves his charge? The whole tenor of their conduct to Charles I. during the contest between him and his parliament, and to Charles II. during his concealment after the battle of Worcester, so disingenuously concealed by *Lord Clarendon*, renders the charge utterly improbable. Clarendon's excessive dislike, both of the roman-catholics and the protestant dissenters, is an acknowledged blemish in his character. *Catholic* and *loyal* are synonymous terms:—You know, that, when Mirabeau wished to

* Translation of Mosheim's History, 2d edit. vol. 4, p. 187.

republicanize his countrymen, he said, "*il faut* "*commençer par décatholiçer la Françe.*"

5. You accuse the roman-catholics of "having "treated with Cromwell, for taking an oath of "submission to his government, as the price of that "indulgence which he, in his true spirit of tolera-"tion, was willing to have granted."

But would not such an oath of submission have been justifiable? Would it not have been warranted, both by every acknowledged principle of national law, and by universal usage? But the fact is not as you represent it.—The treaty was never closed; those who engaged in it were very few; and they were disavowed. White, a roman-catholic-clergyman, who took an active part in it, fell into great disrepute, and was reproached for his conduct till his latest breath.

You acquit the roman-catholics of being the authors of the *fire of London:* You call it a "senseless calumny." Then, why is this calumny perpetuated by a national monument, and the inscription upon it? Does there exist in any roman-catholic country, with the consent of its government, a monumental marble, that thus,

"*Lifts its head, and lies!*"—POPE.

and excites against one portion of the community the prejudice and animosity of the other?

XVIII. 3.

The Corporation and Test Acts.

1. I DO not recollect that you take notice of the *Corporation Act**. The roman-catholics are, in common with the protestant dissenters, subject to its penal inflictions. The object of it was to exclude from corporations some disaffected persons, who had obtained admission into them during the preceding troubles: it was not, therefore, directed against the roman-catholics, and should not be continued in force against them. In fact, the object of this act having long waved entirely, is it not clear that the time for its total repeal is arrived?

2. Of *the Test Act*† I shall only observe, that it was passed under the strong apprehensions then entertained, of a roman-catholic successor to the British throne; an event, which the bill of rights has now rendered utterly impossible: no good reason can, therefore, be now assigned for keeping it in force.

* 13 Car. II. s. 2, c. 1, (1661).
† 25 Car. II. c. 2.

XVIII. 4.

The Act of the 30th of Charles II. which excludes Roman-catholics from sitting and voting in Parliament.*

In 1821, a bill was brought into parliament for the repeal of this act; it passed the house of commons, but was lost in the house of lords. While it was on the table of that noble house, your correspondent published "*An Inquiry into the Declaration against Transubstantiation, contained in the act of the 30th of Charles II. which excluded roman-catholics from parliament.*" I hope you will excuse my inserting it in this letter, which I have now the honour of addressing to you.

"In a few days, the bill, which has passed the house of commons, to relieve roman-catholic peers from the disabilities imposed upon them by the act of the 30th of Charles II. with regard to their right of sitting and voting in the house of peers, will come under the consideration of the members of that noble house.

"It is most clear that every generous mind will wish it success:—What peer can behold, indifferent and unmoved, the duke of Norfolk and the other roman-catholic peers, listening to a debate, which is to decide, whether, in the time to come, they are to enjoy their hereditary seat in the house, or their ignominious exclusion from it is to remain for ever?

* 30 Car. II. s. 2, c. 1.

"Assuredly it must be acknowledged, that, either to make it the duty or to reconcile it to the feelings of any peer, to vote for a continuance of this exclusion, the very strongest case must be supposed; —or, in other words, that it must be demonstratively proved, that the admission of half a dozen catholic peers to exercise their hereditary right of sitting and voting in the house of peers, will expose his majesty's person and government to real danger. —Nothing short of this can justify a measure, thus bitter and contumelious. Now, can the existence of this danger be gravely contended?—Has the crown, the state, or the law any better friends? Any, upon whose loyalty and attachment, under all imaginable circumstances, they can more confidently or more completely rely, than those, who profess the roman-catholic religion?

"This, the divine eloquence of Mr. Fox, Mr. Pitt, Mr. Burke, Mr. Grattan, Mr. Canning, Mr. Plunkett, and the other illustrious advocates of the catholic cause, has repeatedly urged. I trust that these noble effusions of oratory are present to the recollection of every noble personage, before whom the subject now comes for discussion. The wickedness of the act of Charles II. its injustice and impolicy, and the injustice and impolicy of preserving it in activity in the present state of things, were unanswerably proved by the right honourable mover of the bill*. His speech is deservedly the theme of universal admiration and applause. In the memory

* The Right honourable George Canning.

of the grateful catholics it will ever live. They are an honourable body;—a person, who has thus deserved well of them, has not lived in vain.

"The bill is now on the table of the house of lords; and their lordships are now to decide on its justice and policy. On the latter, I shall say nothing; but I beg leave to offer some observations on the former. I submit them in a particular manner, (but with the utmost deference and humility), to the venerable prelates of the national church. To their opinions and feelings, especially on all questions that regard religious or moral bearings of any legislative measure, the house, (and I may add), the public at large, pay the greatest respect.—Their attention, therefore, to the following observations may, without impropriety, be, I apprehend, particularly solicited.

"The point which I mean to consider is, *Whether A PROTESTANT OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND can conscientiously make the declaration against transubstantiation and the invocation of saints contained in the act of the 30th of Charles II. and required by that act to be taken by the members of both houses before they sit and vote in parliament.*

"This declaration is a solemn affirmation:—The Divine Being is solemnly adjured to witness it; and to attest the party's belief that what he affirms is true:—The declaration, therefore, is a sacred act of religion.

"Every person, who makes this declaration,

swears, "*That he doth believe that there is not* "*any transubstantiation of the elements of bread* "*and wine into the body and blood of Christ, at* "*or after the consecration thereof by any person* "*whomsoever :*"—and that "*the invocation or* "*adoration of the Virgin Mary or any other saint,* "*and the sacrifice of the mass, as they are now* "*used, in the church of Rome, are superstitious* "*and idolatrous* *."

"All must admit, that to make this declaration, and to swear to it with a safe conscience, the person who makes it, and swears to the belief of its truth, has a clear and precise knowledge of the meaning of all the words which it contains; and should, therefore, clearly understand what the words sacrament, transubstantiation, invocation, adoration and the sacrifice of the mass, mean, in the sense in which they are propounded in the declaration.

"Now—can it be seriously said, that this is the case?

"1. As a preliminary observation, I may remark, that *the declaration expressly terms that religious rite, which is called our Lord's Supper, a sacrament :—But—the disciples of Hoadley, (and these unquestionably form a large proportion of the clergy of the church of England),* deny even the existence of a sacrament;—all the disciples of that distinguished prelate think the word "sacrament"

* Doctor Southey will, perhaps, inform us, in some future edition of his "Book of the Church," whether protestants may conscientiously take this oath.

is a word without a meaning. When therefore, in the declaration, they call "our Lord's Supper" a "sacrament," they call it that, which they themselves affirm to have no existence.—Can it be said that any, who are of this opinion, can make the declaration with a safe concience?

"2. Without dwelling on this point, (which however seems to deserve some consideration), permit me to ask *if a person can conscientiously affirm upon his oath, that "there is not any transub-" stantiation in the sacrament," unless by due inquiry he has previously ascertained that there is none?*

"To ascertain this, he must settle that the word transubstantiation uniformly means the absolute annihilation of one substance, and the substitution of another in its place; and that it is never used by approved writers to mean the transference of one substance into another. If the word transubstantiation bear the latter meaning, no protestant, who believes the real presence, (and all protestants of the established church of England profess to believe it), can conscientiously swear, or even simply affirm the negative.—Now, that the transubstantiation will bear the latter meaning, some of the most eminent lights of the church of England are agreed*.—Can it then be thought decent,—can it

* See the Essay on Catholic Communion, 8vo.: the work of a protestant divine, first published in the year 1704. The third and best edition was printed in 1812. In referring to this work, I refer also to the authorities cited in it.

be considered consistent with the sacredness of an oath, to swear to the belief of the contrary, without any limitation or explanation whatever?

"3. Other words in the declaration are a fair subject for a similar inquiry. Admitting, however, (but we humbly conceive this is not always the case), that the party who makes the declaration fully understands the meaning of all these words, can he, with a safe conscience, declare upon his oath, that the sacrifice of the mass, the invocation of the Virgin Mary, and the other saints, as used in the church of Rome, "are superstitious and idolatrous?" Surely, *to make this declaration upon oath, with a safe conscience, a person should possess a clear knowledge of the doctrines of the catholic church of Rome on all these heads.*—Now, those only can be said to have this knowledge, who have read the expositions given of them by the church of Rome in her own decrees, or by her own approved writers. —How very few have examined either!

"4. We shall first consider *transubstantiation and the mass.*

"*Doctor Taylor*, the bishop of Down, than whom the whole protestant church boasts no fairer name, and who had fully examined the points in question, declared, after his examination of them, that the doctrine of the catholic church upon them was not idolatrous*. "The object," says this

* In his Liberty of Prophecying, sect. 20.

learned and eloquent prelate, "of their adoration "in the sacrament, is the only true and eternal "God, hypostatically united with his holy hu- "manity, which humanity they believe actually "present under the veil of the sacrament:—and, "if they thought him not present, they are so far "from worshipping the bread, that they profess it "idolatry to do so. This is demonstration that "the soul has nothing in it that is idolatrical; the "will has nothing in it that is not a great enemy "to idolatry."—*Thorndyke*, the learned prebend- ary of Westminster*, mentions with indignation that a charge of idolatry should be brought against catholics, in consequence of their belief of transub- stantiation. "Will any papist," says this distin- guished writer, "acknowledge that he honours the "elements of the eucharist for God? Will com- "mon sense charge him with honouring that in "the sacrament, which he believes not to be there?" —"It is a monstrous error," says *bishop Cosin* †, "to deny that Christ is to be adored in the eu- "charist."

"Many other protestant authorities to the same effect might be cited, but this is not a place for such citations. We must however beg leave to add *bishop Kenn*'s expression in his "*Exposition*," licensed in 1685,—"O God incarnate, how thou "canst give us thy flesh to eat, and thy blood to

* Just Weights and Measures, c. 19.

† History of Transubstantiation.

" drink; how thy flesh is meat indeed; how thou, " who art in heaven, art present upon the altar, " I can by no means explain: but I firmly believe " it all, because thou hast said it."

" Where such high authorities concur in a deliberate and solemn opinion upon any subject, it certainly is allowable to dissent from them; but, is it allowable, is it decent, is it even safe to affirm a contrary opinion upon oath?—To do it after a long and serious examination is somewhat hazardous; to do it without any examination, must be rashness in the extreme.

" What would the barons of the exchequer have said of a person, who, on a late trial for the adulteration of beer, had sworn that no quassia had been infused into it, and had afterwards confessed on cross-examination, that he took what he said upon trust, and had himself never examined the composition?—Where is the real difference between the cases? Does it require *less* rectitude to swear, —but the awfulness of the subject withholds me from pursuing the interrogation.

" We may ask, whether, if idolatry be chargeable on *transubstantiation*, it be not chargeable, with equal justice, on *consubstantiation and impanation*, one or other of which is maintained in every protestant creed? If it be chargeable on these doctrines, it evidently follows, that, when a person swears transubstantiation to be idolatrous, he equally swears to his belief, that all who maintain the doc-

trine of the real presence, whether catholic or protestant, are idolaters;—that all his own catholic ancestors were idolaters;—that all existing roman-catholics are idolaters;—that all the members of the Greek church, and the oriental churches, are idolaters;—that the fathers of the established church of England, Cranmer, Ridley, and the other protestant divines, who framed the communion service in 1548, were idolaters;—that queen Elizabeth, who patronized the doctrine of the real presence, was an idolater;—that the eminent divines, who, by her desire, framed the thirty-nine articles and the liturgy, in terms designedly so comprehensive, as to let in the believers of transubstantiation, were idolaters;—and, (if we believe *doctor Bramhall*, bishop of Derry), that all true believers of the genuine doctrine of the church of England are idolaters. "No genuine son of that church," says this celebrated prelate*, "did ever deny a true real presence."

"If idolatry is chargeable on consubstantiation, as much as it is on transubstantiation, (and it would most assuredly be found difficult to show that it is not), then, as consubstantiation is an acknowledged tenet of the Augustan confession, and therefore received by every lutheran, our late venerable monarch married an idolater.

"5. Thus far respecting transubstantiation and the mass. We proceed to the doctrine of *the invocation of the Virgin Mary and the other saints.*

* Answer to Militière's Triumph of Truth, p. 74.

"We have seen that every person, who makes the declaration, affirms, upon oath, his belief that these doctrines, as they are used in the church of Rome, are "*idolatrous and superstitious.*"

"But, of those, who thus swear this doctrine of the church of Rome to be idolatrous and superstitious, how few, how very few, have taken due pains to ascertain it! I beg leave to state this doctrine of the catholic church, in a very few lines, from authorities which all must allow to be unquestionable.

"It was thus defined at the *Council of Trent*, by the pope, and nearly 300 roman-catholic prelates, assembled from every part of the catholic world:— "The saints reigning with Christ, offer up their "prayers to God for men, it is good and useful "suppliantly to invoke them, and to have recourse "to their prayers, help and assistance, to obtain "favours from God, through his Son Jesus Christ "our Lord, who is alone our Redeemer and "Saviour."

"In conformity to this doctrine, the *Catechism of Pope Pius V.* teaches, that "God and the saints "are not to be prayed to in the same manner; for "we pray to God that he himself would give us "good things, and deliver us from evil things; "but we beg of the saints, (because they are "pleasing to God), that they would be our advo- "cates, and obtain from him what we stand in need "of." This is most explicitly taught in all our catechisms. Roman-catholic children, in their very

first catechism, are asked the following questions, and give the following answers:—Q. "Does the "second commandment forbid the making of "images? A. It forbids the making of them so as "to adore them; that is, it forbids making them "our gods.—Q. Does this commandment forbid all "honour and veneration of the saints and angels? "A. No; we are to honour them as God's special "friends and servants, but not with the honour "that belongs to God."—The catechisms for the adult express the same doctrine, but in stronger terms. Doctor Challoner's "Summary of Chris-"tian Doctrine," prefixed to "The Garden of the "Soul," the most popular Prayer Book of the English roman-catholics, lays down the same doctrine; and in "The Papist Misrepresented and "Represented," published by the reverend Mr. Gother, our most eminent controversialist in the seventeenth century, and often republished by doctor Challoner, (the seventeenth edition of it is now before me), the following anathema is pronounced against the idolatrous worship of the saints:—"Cursed is he that believes the saints in heaven to "be his redeemers; that prays to them as such; "or that gives God's honour to them, or to any "creature whatsoever. Amen."

"Here, then, let me ask, whether, after perusing these passages, (and a thousand like them might be produced to him), any protestant of any description can honourably and conscientiously,

even in common conversation, charge idolatry on the doctrine of the catholic church, thus solemnly, explicitly, and authoritatively professed and explained by herself?

"Some passages in a few catholic books of devotion, some practices of a few uninstructed catholics, in which the devotion to the saints has been carried to an improper length, and is therefore justly reprehensible, may be produced: I admit it.—But these are as much condemned by the constituted authorities of the catholic church, as they can be by any protestants. Would not the divines of the protestant churches have just cause of complaint, if the reveries of Jacob Behmen, Swedenborg, or Joanna Southcote, were charged upon their churches? "Look to our articles, to our homilies, to our "books of common prayer," they would justly say. The catholics say the same: "Look to our "councils, to our authorized catechisms and prayer-"books; try us by those.—And, tried by these, "can you seriously say that our doctrine, respect-"ing the invocation of the saints, is idolatrous?—"can you even call it irrational?"

"6. Several of the most eminent protestant divines have acquitted this doctrine of the catholics from the charge of idolatry. *Doctor Luther* acquitted them of it: *archbishop Sheldon, bishops Blandford, Gunning, Montague,* and many other of the brightest lights of the established church, have acquitted them of it.—*Bishop Montague,* in particular,

owns, that "the blessed in heaven do recommend "to God, in their prayers, their kindred, friends, "and acquaintance on earth." "This," saith the learned prelate, "is the common voice with the "general concurrence, without contradiction, of "reverend and learned antiquity, for aught I ever "could read or understand; and I see no cause or "reason to dissent from them touching intercession "in this kind *."

"*The faculty of the lutheran university of Helmstadt* acquitted them of it. On the marriage of the princess Christina of Wolfenbuttle, a lutheran, with the archduke of Austria, her court consulted that faculty, "Whether a protestant princess, "destined to marry a catholic prince, could, without "wounding her conscience, embrace the roman-"catholic religion?" The faculty replied, that "it "could not answer the proposed question in a "solid manner, without having previously decided, "whether the catholics were or were not engaged "in *errors that were fundamental, or opposed "to salvation?* Or, which was the same thing, "whether the state of the catholic church were "such, that persons might practise in it the true "worship of God, and arrive at salvation?" The question thus raised by them, the divines of Helmstadt discussed at length, and concluded in these terms: "After having thus shown, that the foun-

* For this, and the other authorities referred to, see the Essay already cited, c. 3.

" dation of religion subsists in the roman-catholic " religion, so that a person may be orthodox in it, " live well in it, die well in it, and obtain salvation " in it, the decision of the proposed question is easy: " We are of opinion, that the most serene princess " of Wolfenbuttle may, in favour of her marriage, " embrace the catholic religion." This opinion is dated the 28th of April, 1687, and was printed in the same year at Cologne. Now, if the doctrines of the transubstantiation and the mass, or the invocation of the saints, as they are used in the church of Rome, were idolatrous and superstitious, persons could not practise in that church the true worship of God, or arrive in it at salvation; they could not be orthodox in it, or live well in it, or die well in it, or obtain salvation in it. But, in direct opposition to this theological oath of the British legislature, the lutheran divines of Helmstadt, specially and solemnly consulted, declared that the doctrines of transubstantiation, the mass, and the invocation of the saints, as used in the church of Rome, are not idolatrous or superstitious; and assured an illustrious Brunswicker, that, in the church professing them, she might safely live and safely die.

"I shall cite two more protestant authorities; they apply equally to transubstantiation and the mass, and to the invocation of saints. *Leibniz*, (certainly one of the greatest literary characters whom the world has produced), has, in his *Systema Theologicum*, discussed, with admirable candour, all the

controverted tenets of catholic faith, and pronounced the catholic doctrines, in question, not to be idolatrous.

"With one further authority only I shall trouble my readers *.

"*Boswell.* What do you think of the idolatry "of the mass?

"*Johnson.* Sir, THERE IS NO IDOLATRY. "They believe God to be there, and adore him.

"*Boswell.* The invocation of the saints?

"*Johnson.* THEY DO NOT WORSHIP THE "SAINTS; they invoke them; they only ask their "prayers."

"7. One further question let me ask. Are not catholics married by protestant clergymen? Are they not married in protestant churches? Do not protestant bishops often marry them? Could this be done, if they were idolaters? Do the peers, who, or whose sons or whose daughters have married catholics, suppose they have married idolaters?

"Here we pause.—We repeat, that it is far from our wish to discuss, or even to assert in this place, the truth of the catholic doctrines, on the points we have noticed.—But,

"BE THAT DOCTRINE TRUE, OR BE IT FALSE, can any person, in his cool and deliberate judgment, say, that the legislature of the United Kingdom can worthily or wisely require any of its subjects to

* The Life of Dr. Johnson, by Mr. Boswell, vol. 1, p. 561, 2d edit.

assert, with the solemn asseveration of an oath, either the affirmative or negative belief of a doctrine, upon which the highest authorities, even of their own church, have been, are, and probably till the latest time, will continue to be divided?

"Surely the sacredness of an oath, which never should be taken, if the truth of what is sworn to admits of reasonable doubt,—good sense, which is shocked by the language of the declaration,—the terms of amity which subsist between the United Kingdom and many catholic states, and which render the declaration an uncivil state paper,—the littleness in wounding unnecessarily the feelings of that proportion of the community which is catholic, (*for a protestant is not more hurt at a Turk's calling him a christian dog, than a catholic is at a protestant's calling him an idolater*),—the impolicy of keeping any thing in existence, which unnecessarily insults and irritates,—the acknowledged wisdom and expediency of every legislative or ministerial measure, which promotes a reciprocity of good-will and conciliation,—and, above all, THE MERITS,—we confidently say it, THE MERITS OF THE CATHOLICS,—seem to point out the propriety of repealing this objectionable and inofficious declaration."

XVIII. 5.

Oates's Plot.

You call, what you term *the popish plot*, an infamous affair: thus Hume, thus Fox, thus every other person of honour and talent, describes it; then, why are the oaths to which it gave rise, and under which so many roman-catholics actually suffer, still kept in force?

I beg leave to transcribe Mr. Fox's observations upon it.—"Although, therefore," these are that great man's words, "upon a review of this truly "shocking transaction, we may be fairly justified in "adopting the milder alternative, and in imputing "to the greater part of those concerned in it, rather "an extraordinary degree of blind credulity, than "the deliberate wickedness of planning and assist-"ing in the perpetration of legal murder; yet the "proceedings on the popish plot must always be con-"sidered as an indelible disgrace upon the English "nation, in which king, parliament, judges, juries, "witnesses, prosecutors, have all their respective, "though certainly not equal, shares. Witnesses, of "such a character as not to deserve credit in the "most trifling cause, upon the most immaterial facts, "gave evidence so incredible, or,—to speak more "properly,—so impossible to be true, that it ought "not to have been believed if it had come from the "mouth of Cato; and upon such evidence, from "such witnesses, were innocent men condemned to "death and executed. Prosecutors, whether attor-

" nies and solicitors-general, or managers of im-
" peachment, acted with the fury which, in such
" circumstances, might be expected; juries partook,
" naturally enough, of the national ferment; and
" judges, whose duty it was to guard them against
" such impressions, were scandalously active in con-
" firming them in their prejudices, and inflaming
" their passions."—" Lord chief justice Scroggs," doctor Milner justly observes, " took in with the
" side, and ranted for the plot; hewing down popery,
" as Scanderberg did the Turks. The attorney-
" general used to say on the trials for murder, 'if
" the man be a papist, then he is guilty, because it
" is the interest of papists to murder us all'*."

I am aware, that the number of the sufferers for Oates's plot falls very short of the number of those whom you term the Marian martyrs: but permit me to ask you, which, in your cool deliberate judgment, was the worst spirit,—that which consigned the victims of Oates's subornations to the gibbet, or that which consigned the Marian martyrs to the flames? Surely, if we should be called upon to strike a balance between Mary's persecutions and the legal murders for Oates's plot, we must confess that the latter is by far the greater disgrace to the English nation †.

* North's Examen, p. 130; Doctor Milner's Seventh Letter to Doctor Sturges, p. 304, 7th edit.

† In 1680, while the memory of this transaction was still recent, an argumentative and eloquent vindication of the sufferers was published, under the title of " The Papists' " Plea." It was afterwards printed among lord Somers's tracts.

I must add, that you must not estimate the sufferings of the roman-catholics for Oates's plot, by the number of those who perished for it on the scaffold. All the laws against them were, from the time of the first mention of the plot, till the end of the reign of Charles II. executed upon them with the most horrid severity. Individuals are still living, whose fathers have told them what their fathers used to relate of the wretchedness and misery of the general body, whilst the delusion lasted. Even at that distance of time, few could speak of it without evident agitation and horror: they appeared to shrink even from the recollection of it.

For their supposed part in the plot, ten laymen and seven priests, (one of whom was seventy, and another eighty years old), were executed. Eight other priests were hanged and embowelled in the reign of Charles II. for the mere exercise of their functions, without any reference to the plot.

—A still more powerful defence of the catholics is, the "Apologie pour les Catholiques, contre les Fausetés et les "Calomnies d'un Livre, intitulé, '*La Politique du Clergé de "France*, fait premièrement en France, et puis traduit en "Flamand;—à Liège, 1681, 2 vols. 8vo." The celebrated Arnaud was the author of the work: it has seldom been equalled, either in powerful reasoning or splendid eloquence. But the fullest and best account of the plot is to be found in, "An historical Narrative of the horrid Plot and Conspiracy "of Titus Oates, called the Popish Plot, in its various branches "and progress, selected from the most authentic protestant "historians; in which are added, some cursory Observations "on the Test Act, by Mr. William Eusebius Andrews, 1818, "1 vol. 8vo."

With the reign of Charles II. the *sanguinary part of the penal code*, against the roman-catholics, finally closed.

The whole number of those who have suffered death in England for their religion, since the Reformation, is as follows:—

In the reign of Henry VIII.	- -	59
- - - - - of queen Elizabeth	-	204
- - - - - of king James I.	- -	25
- - - - - of Charles I. and during the rebellion	- -	23
- - - - - of Charles II.	- -	8
		319

I am confident that this number is not exaggerated: every research which I have made respecting the sufferings of the English roman-catholics, until the accession of his late majesty, has convinced me that the extent of them is not known.

These are unpleasing topics. May "the Book "of the Church" be the last work which renders the mention of them necessary. "May,"—permit me to exclaim with Fénélon,—"the kingdom of "truth, where there is no error, no scandal, no "division,—where God will communicate to it "universal peace,—soon arrive!"

XVIII. 6.

JAMES THE SECOND.

Bill of Rights—Acts of Settlement.

In the "Historical Memoirs of the English, "Irish and Scottish Catholics," I have expressed my sentiments upon the conduct of James II.:—my opinion that, in theory, his project for effecting a general religious toleration, was entitled to praise; but that, as the public mind was not disposed to receive it favourably, it was unwise; and that the means which he adopted for carrying it into execution were unconstitutional. I shall now only add, that none disapproved of his measures more than the catholics: "All judicious persons of the catho- "lic communion," says Hume, "were disgusted "with them, and foresaw their consequences. Lord "Arundell, lord Powis, and lord Bellasyse, remon- "strated against them, and suggested more mode- "rate councils. When lord Tyrconnel disclosed "James's plan for catholicizing Ireland, lord Bel- "lasyse declared, 'his majesty was a fool and a "madman enough to ruin ten kingdoms.'"

To the *Bill of Rights*, and the *Acts of Settlement*, no portion of his majesty's subjects more constitutionally submits, than the roman-catholics: they only suggest, that no construction of the Bill of Rights, and no inferences from it, should be adopted to their prejudice, unless they are warranted by a fair construction of the *words* of the acts. *They pro-*

test against any interpretation of them that amounts to legislation. They are sensible that the legislature has a right to interpret its acts, and that it is the duty of subjects to submit to its interpretation; but they conceive, that this legislative right of interpretation is always exceeded, when the interpretation of legislative acts is extended to cases or provisions not contemplated by the legislature that framed them. The only case in the contemplation of the legislators of the Bill of Rights and the Acts of Settlement, was the succession of a roman-catholic to the crown: the only means to prevent it, in their contemplation, was the infliction of an actual disability of succession upon all roman-catholics and their heirs. It evidently follows, that the grant to the roman-catholics of any boon, short of a removal of this disability, does not reach the Bill of Rights, or the Acts of Settlement, and that it is incongruous to urge them against it.

On this important subject, I beg leave to refer you to Mr. Canning and Mr. Plunkett's unanswered and unanswerable printed speeches. Can it give you pleasure to think, on the religion and merits of the roman-catholics, differently from these great men? or from Mr. Pitt, Mr. Fox, and Mr. Burke, who, agreeing in nothing else, agreed in defending the roman-catholics, in panegyrizing their conduct, and strenuously advocating their emancipation? Would any of these eminent men have approved of "the Book of the Church," or the spirit which appears to have dictated it?

XVIII. 7.

CONCLUSION.

Doctor Southey's repeated Charge of Superstition and Idolatry against the Roman-catholics.

THESE words are the burthen of "the Book of "the Church." In the page of it which is now before me, they occur for the last time. To the ear of a roman-catholic, when they are applied to his religion, they are the most offensive words in language.

1. You have seen, in a preceding page, that the *divines of the university of Helmstadt* declared, on a solemn occasion, and in a very solemn manner, that "the foundation of religion subsists in the "roman-catholic church; so that a person may be "orthodox in it, live well in it, die well in it, and "obtain salvation in it."—Where, then, in the opinions of the divines of Helmstadt, are its "SUPERSTITION AND IDOLATRY?"

2. You know what advances to a reconciliation were made by *Bossuet, and Leibniz, and Molanus, the lutheran abbot of Lockhum* *. "The abbot," says Bossuet, "has actually conciliated the points "so essential of justification and the eucharist;

* Œuvres Posthumes de Bossuet, vol. 1, nouvelle édition; des Œuvres de Bossuet, vol. 12; Leibnizii Opera Stud. Lud. Dutens, vol. 1, c. 5; and the Pensées de Leibniz, 2 vols. 8vo.

" nothing is wanting to him on that side, but that " he should be avowed. Why should we not hope " to conclude in the same manner *disputes less* " *difficult and of less importance!*" Surely then, therefore, Leibniz and Molanus saw, in the church of Rome, no " SUPERSTITION OR IDOLATRY."

3. You know that Leibniz was one of the most learned men and most profound philosophers whom the world has produced:—read his " *Systema* " *Theologicum.*" He discusses in it, article by article, the whole creed of the roman-catholic church:——He discovers in none of its tenets " SUPERSTITION OR IDOLATRY."

4. You know in what terms of respect other protestants have spoken of the church of Rome. To some of these I have referred in the preceding article. Permit me now to refer you to *Melancthon*'s letter to cardinal Campegio, published by Beausobre in his valuable History of the Reformation; it shows how nearly, at one time, matters were thought to be accommodated between the catholic church and the lutherans:—Permit me also to refer you to the Memoir which accompanied the *Confession of Augsburg*, when it was presented to Charles V. in which it was requested,—" 1st, That the pope " would have the goodness to concede to the pro- " testants communion under both kinds, particu- " larly as the protestants did not blame those who " communicated in one kind only; and confessed " that the body of Jesus Christ entire, together " with his blood, was received under the sole species

" of bread :—2dly, That his holiness would allow " the marriage of priests :—3dly, That he would " allow, or at least tolerate, the marriages already " contracted by priests, or other religious persons, " and dispense with their vows. As to their mass," says the writer of the Memoir, " we retain its prin- " cipal ceremonies." The distinction of meats and other observances, Melancthon treats as secondary points, to be easily settled.

Beausobre considers the authenticity of the Letter and Memoir to be unquestionable. " Nor are we," says Beausobre, " to hold Melancthon alone re- " sponsible for this relaxation, as it appears that the " protestant princes declared to the mediators, that, " if they would permit communion under both " kinds, the marriage of priests, and the celebration " of mass, according to their reformation of it, and " this only till the decision of the council should " be obtained upon these points, they were willing " to obey in the rest." Beausobre also brings strong reasons to show, that these propositions were not suggested without the knowledge of Luther. Thus Melancthon, and the theologians who co-operated with him*, saw, in the roman-catholic church, no " SUPERSTITION OR IDOLATRY."

5. Cardinal Pallavicini mentions, on the authority of a letter of the cardinal legate Campegio, that " the parties were on the foot of coming to an " agreement, when some injudicious publications, " which he mentions, rekindled the discord."

* Lib. 3, c. 5.

Probably those injudicious publications talked of "POPERY," and its "SUPERSTITION AND IDO-"LATRY."

Greatly indeed is it to be lamented, that, where such a general disposition of conciliation appeared, and such near approaches to it were actually made, any thing should have prevented its completion!

With the reign of James II. you close your work; the task which I have imposed upon myself is therefore finished.

With many thanks to you for the pleasure I have derived from many of your former publications,

I have the honour to be,

With the greatest respect,

Your most obedient servant,

CHARLES BUTLER.

Lincoln's-Inn,
4th November 1824.

APPENDIX.

Note I.

Opinions of Foreign Universities on the temporal Power of the Pope, referred to in page 124.

IN pursuance of Mr. Pitt's suggestions, three questions were sent to the universities of the Sorbonne, Louvaine, Douay, Alcala and Salamanca. They were expressed in the following terms, and received the following answers:

" 1. Has the pope or cardinals, or any body of men, " or any individual of the church of Rome, any civil " authority, power, jurisdiction, or pre-eminence what- " soever, within the realm of England?

" 2. Can the pope or cardinals, or any body of men, or " any individual of the church of Rome, absolve or dis- " pense with his majesty's subjects, from their oath of " allegiance, upon any pretext whatsoever?

" 3. Is there any principle in the tenets of the catholic " faith, by which catholics are justified in not keeping " faith with heretics, or other persons differing from " them in religious opinions, in any transaction, either " of a public or a private nature?

The universities answered unanimously:

" 1. That the pope or cardinals, or any body of men, or " any individual of the church of Rome, has not, nor " have any civil authority, power, jurisdiction, or pre- " eminence whatsoever, within the realm of England.

" 2. That the pope or cardinals, or any body of men, " or any individual of the church of Rome, cannot ab- " solve or dispense with his majesty's subjects, from " their oath of allegiance, upon any pretext whatsoever.

" 3. That there is no principle in the tenets of the " catholic faith, by which catholics are justified in not " keeping faith with heretics, or other persons differing " from them in religions opinions, in any transactions, " either of a public or a private nature."

The opinions of the universities of the Sorbonne, Louvaine, and Douay were first received, and were transmitted to Mr. Pitt with the following letter.

" Sir,

" The committee of the English catholics have the " honour to lay before you, the opinions of the univer- " sities of Sorbonne, Louvaine and Douay, which have " been transmitted to us in consequence of your desire.

" You will, we hope, see, from these opinions, that " the sentiments of the most famous foreign bodies per- " fectly coincide with those which we had the honour " of stating to you last year, as our firm and sincere " tenets.

" At the same time, we beg leave to call to your re- " membrance, that our opinions were fully stated to you " previously to the obtaining those of the foreign uni- " versities; and that they were consulted, not as the " rule by which we form our ideas of the duties of good " subjects, but as a collateral proof to you, that our " sentiments are consonant to those of the most en- " lightened and famous bodies of catholic divines on the " Continent upon these subjects.

" We have the honour to be," &c.

As soon as the other opinions were received, the committee transmitted them also to Mr. Pitt.

A translation of all these answers is inserted in the Appendix to the first volume of Mr. Butler's "Historical Memoirs of the English, Irish, and Scottish Catholics".

Note II.

The Oath taken by the English Roman-catholics, under the Provisions of the Act passed for their Relief, in the Year 1791.

"I, *A. B.*, do hereby declare, that I do profess the "roman-catholic religion.

"I, *A. B.*, do sincerely promise and swear, that I will "be faithful, and bear true allegiance to his majesty "king George the third, and him will defend, to the "utmost of my power, against all conspiracies and "attempts whatever that shall be made against his per-"son, crown or dignity; and I will do my utmost en-"deavour to disclose and make known to his majesty, "his heirs and successors, all treasons and traitorous "conspiracies which may be formed against him or "them: And I do faithfully promise to maintain, sup-"port and defend, to the utmost of my power, the suc-"cession of the crown; which succession, by an act, "intituled, 'An Act for the further Limitation of the "Crown, and better securing the Rights and Liberties of "the Subject,' is and stands limited to the princess "Sophia, electress and duchess dowager of Hanover, "and the heirs of her body, being protestants; hereby

" utterly renouncing and abjuring any obedience or al-
" legiance unto any other person claiming or pretending
" a right to the crown of these realms: And I do swear,
" that I do reject and detest, as an unchristian and im-
" pious position, that it is lawful to murder or destroy
" any person or persons whatsoever, for or under pre-
" tence of their being heretics or infidels; and also,
" that unchristian and impious principle, that faith is
" not to be kept with heretics or infidels: And I further
" declare, that it is not an article of my faith, and that
" I do renounce, reject, and abjure the opinion, that
" princes, excommunicated by the pope and council,
" or any authority of the see of Rome, or by any autho-
" rity whatsoever, may be deposed or murdered by their
" subjects, or any person whatsoever: And I do promise,
" that I will not hold, maintain or abet any such opi-
" nion, or any other opinions contrary to what is ex-
" pressed in this declaration: And I do declare, that
" I do not believe that the pope of Rome, or any other
" foreign prince, prelate, state or potentate hath, or
" ought to have, any temporal or civil jurisdiction,
" power, superiority, or pre-eminence, directly or indi-
" rectly, within this realm: And I do solemnly, in the
" presence of God, profess, testify and declare, that I do
" make this declaration, and every part thereof, in the
" plain and ordinary sense of the words of this oath,
" without any evasion, equivocation, or mental reserva-
" tion whatever; and without any dispensation already
" granted by the pope, or any authority of the see of
" Rome, or any person whatever; and without thinking
" that I am, or can be acquitted before God or man,
" or absolved of this declaration, or any part thereof,
" although the pope, or any other person or authority
" whatsoever, shall dispense with or annul the same, or
" declare it was null and void."

A similar oath was prescribed to the Irish roman-catholics, by the act passed for their relief in the 33d year of his late majesty. No roman-catholic objects to either oath.

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